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German Opera and Operetta at the New Orleans National Theatre, 1866--1878.

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**GERMAN OPERA AND OPERETTA
AT THE NEW ORLEANS NATIONAL THEATRE,
1866-1878**

A Monograph

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts**

in

The School of Music

by

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Abstract

The New Orleans National Theatre was built in 1866 by a group of wealthy German-Americans for the purpose of providing a place for the performance of German theatrical productions. The theatre saw eight seasons between 1866 and 1878 in which some type of operatic productions were performed, generally from fall through early spring of 1866-1867, 1867-1868, 1868-1869, Winter 1870, 1870-1871, 1871-1872, 1872-1873, and 1877-1878. A local theatrical company functioned in six of those seasons, including 1866-1867, the fall of the 1867-1868 season, 1870-1871, 1871-1872, 1872-1873, and 1877-1878. During the intervening seasons, from 1868 through the Winter of 1870, operatic productions were performed solely by traveling German opera troupes. The theatre was sold in 1880 to Philip Werlein, a vendor of pianos in New Orleans, and ceased to function as a German enterprise. The building burned in 1887.

An equal number of operas and operettas was produced at the National Theatre. Most of the operas were performed by the traveling troupes, but various local companies performed seven different operas productions intermittently throughout the entire history of the theatre. All of the operettas were performed by the local companies.

This monograph is a compilation of the operatic activities of the National Theatre drawn primarily from contemporary reviews of the period found in two New Orleans newspapers, the *Daily Picayune* and the German *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. The paper is divided into ten chapters, the first two providing a brief history of German theatre in New Orleans prior to 1866 and a physical description of the structure. The next seven chapters, three through nine, give accounts of the performances of the various operatic productions staged at the

theatre. A conclusion, chapter ten, gives a summary of the operatic productions mounted at the theatre as well as comparisons between the reviews of the two newspapers used as source material. Two appendices are included, one providing a list of works by composers and the other a chronological listing of performances that includes cast lists.

Chapter One

The National Theatre

Opera and musical theatre were integral parts of the cultural life in nineteenth-century New Orleans. Many United States premieres of works by prominent European opera composers, including those of Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864), Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868), Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848), and Jacques Fromental Halévy (1799-1862), were staged in New Orleans, particularly in the twenty years that preceded the War between the States.¹ Several theatres existed there in the nineteenth century, and some of those theatres produced opera and operetta on a regular basis. Notable among those were the French Opera House, the most important opera house in New Orleans after the war; the St. Charles Theatre, at one time the largest theatre in the United States; the Camp Street Theatre; the Varieties Theatre; the Pelican Theatre; the Academy of Music Theatre; the American Theatre; and the National Theatre, built by the German community primarily for German theatre productions.

While the operatic activities of many of these theatres have been well documented,² particularly those of the French Opera House, the St. Charles

¹ Jack Belsom, *Opera in New Orleans*, New Orleans, New Orleans Opera Association (1993), 3.

² Some include, general history: Harry Brunswick Loeb, "The Opera in New Orleans: A Historical Sketch from the earliest Days Through the Season 1914-1915, *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 9 (1916); French Opera House: Lorelle Causey Bender, *The French Opera House of New Orleans, 1859-1890*. Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1940; Jack Belsom, *Opera in New Orleans*; St. Charles Theatre: Lucille Gafford, *A History of the St. Charles Theatre in New Orleans, 1835-1843*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Chicago, 1930; Academy of Music Theatre: Rudolph Valentino Barelllo, *A History of the New Orleans Academy of Music Theatre, 1887-1893*. Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1967, Theodore Edward Boyd, *A History of the New Orleans Academy of Music Theatre, 1869-1880*. Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1965.

Theatre, the Academy of Music Theatre, and the Varieties Theatre, those of the National Theatre have been comparatively neglected. Musical theatre activities at the National Theatre, 1866-1878, now virtually forgotten, were significant, first, because of the number of productions and performances that took place; second, because they are an important part of the rich operatic history of nineteenth-century New Orleans; and third, because they offer an insight into the musical and theatrical activities of the thriving German community that existed there in the nineteenth century alongside the French culture so frequently associated with New Orleans. The purpose of this monograph is to bring to light the repertoire and frequency of operatic productions at the National Theatre in its relatively short life in post-bellum nineteenth-century New Orleans, and its significance within the history of opera there. This monograph will provide such documentation by examining the productions and available reviews of operas and operettas presented at that theatre from 1866 to 1878, which seems to be the last year in which an operatic production in German was mounted at the theatre before it was sold in 1880.

One of the largest seaports on the North American continent in the nineteenth century, New Orleans experienced a large influx of European immigrants in the first half of the century, including a significant number of German immigrants. By 1860 there was a thriving German community in New Orleans of around 20,000. That community built a theatre (on the corner of Magazine and Delord (now Howard Street) in 1839 for the specific purpose of producing theatre in the German language. It is believed that the first theatrical production in German in the United States took place in that theatre in December of that year.³ The building burned in 1855,⁴ however, and the

³ Arthur Muehlenbrock, "The German Drama on the New Orleans Stage," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 26 (1943), 372.

⁴ John Fredrick Nau, *The German People of New Orleans, 1850-1900* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1958), 98.

German community was forced to rent other theatres in the city to stage their productions, and did so until after the end of the War between the States. In 1866 three prominent Germans in New Orleans, Christian and Louis Schneider and Hermann Zuberbier, built the lavish National Theatre on the corner of Perdido and Baronne, which is the present site of the Pavillon Hotel (facing, however, the opposite direction). A reproduction of a portion of a map dating from 1883 published by the D. H. Holmes company, found on the following page (figure 1),⁵ shows the location of Werlein Hall, the name given to the building after its purchase by Philip Werlein in 1880.

Probably due to the theatre's burning in 1887, resources are scarce and are limited mostly to newspapers from the period in question, primarily the German *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* and the *Daily Picayune*. Other sources include brief mentions in works dealing with theatre in nineteenth-century New Orleans, and two graduate theses.⁶ While these two theses deal with activity at the National Theatre, they make no attempt at a complete and detailed documentation of the musical activities of the theatre.

⁵ The top border of the reproduction of the map is as it appears in the original, with Werlein Hall at the edge of the upper margin.

⁶ Arthur H. Muehlenbrock, "The German Drama on the New Orleans Stage," Doctoral Dissertation, University of Iowa, 1941, and subsequently published in the *Louisiana Historical Quarterly* 26 (1943), 361-677; and Lenis Joseph Richard, Jr., "The Development of Opera in New Orleans from the Civil War to the Burning of the French Opera House in 1919," Master's thesis, Louisiana State University, 1959.

Muehlenbrock's main focus is a discussion of the playwrights of theatrical performances in the German language in New Orleans, 1839-1890, though composers of musical works are only mentioned. There are brief listings of performers of musical works staged at the National theatre, but the lists are incomplete and do not specify in what productions the performers appeared. His work does include a comprehensive listing of theatrical performances in German in New Orleans, but there are frequent mistakes and omissions, including operatic works and performances.

Richard's thesis mentions activity at the National Theatre on several occasions, but concentrates on traveling troupes that visited the Theatre both during its German management and after it was sold to Philip Werlein.

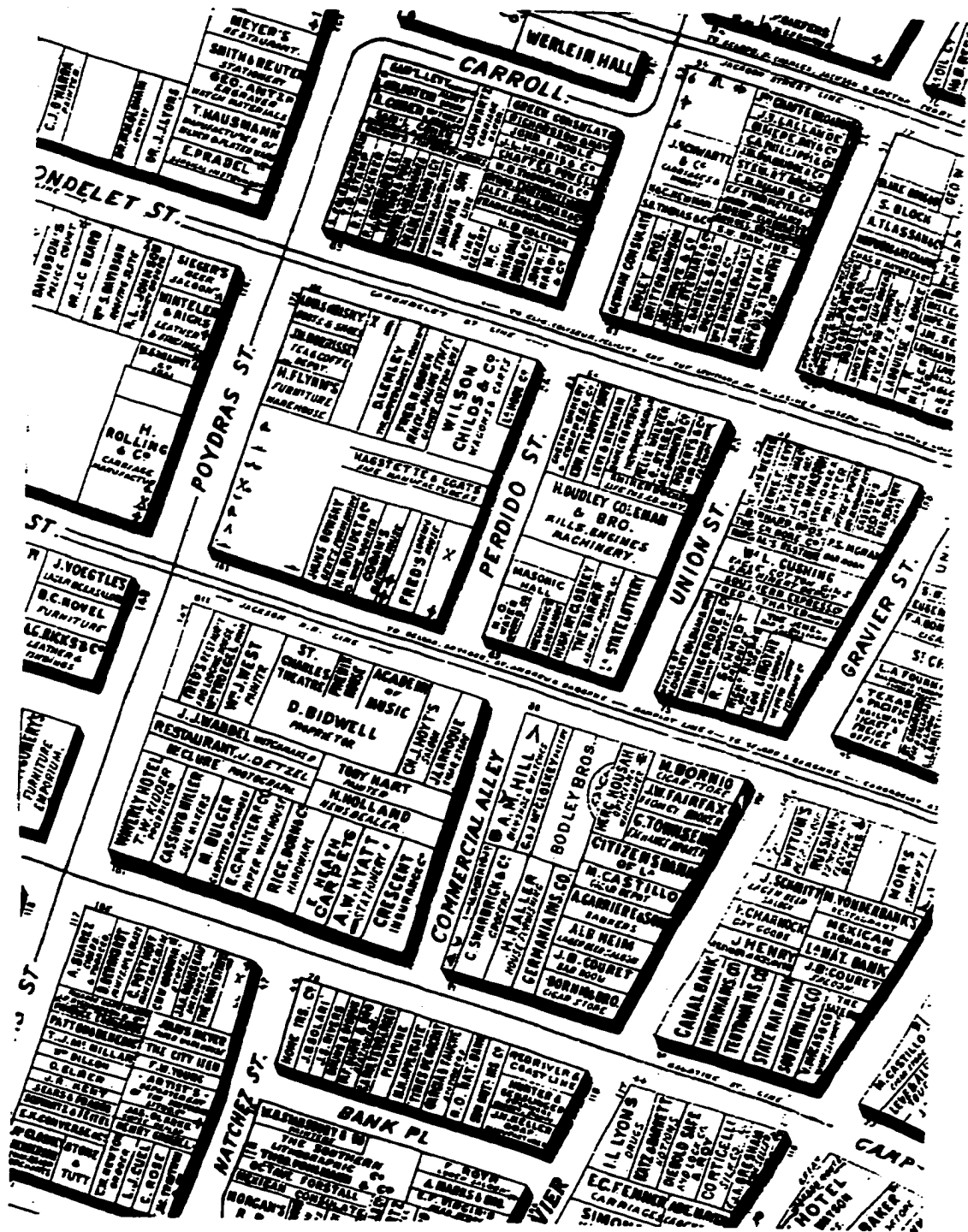


Figure 1
Portion of a map of New Orleans published by the D. H. Holmes Dry Goods Company, 1883.

Chapter Two

The Structure

A detailed description of the theatre can be drawn from newspaper articles at the time of the theatre's opening.⁷ The audience capacity was about 1600,⁸ and by all accounts it was a very elegant hall.⁹ Built on the site of a local railroad depot,¹⁰ the theatre itself was on the second floor of the building in which it was housed. The first floor was initially a tavern, but was later divided and made into various shops. An engraving of the structure is found in *Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated*, which dates from 1873,¹¹ and a reproduction of that engraving can be found on the following page (figure 2).

The architect was William Thiel, the builder Thomas O'Neil, the bricklayers Ivens and Brothers, and the iron work was by Bennett and Lurges.¹² A detailed description of the structural features of the building appeared in the 6 October edition of *The New Orleans Times*, and includes the following description:

The columns that form the doorways are some two feet in diameter--hollow, but the space is filled up with bricks and cement. . . . From pillar to pillar extend iron slabs, upon which the halls are built. These slabs are two inches thick, and from each of which rises a heavy iron arch which is built in and from part of

⁷ The bulk of the description is drawn from the 18 November 1866 issue of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. Details gathered from other sources are duly noted.

⁸ *Daily Picayune*, 22 November 1866, p. 1, c. 5.

⁹ Several instances attesting to the beauty of the theatre are found in the *Daily Picayune*, including the following: "The National is one of our most beautiful theatres, both as regards its interior and exterior. From any portion of the interior a fine view may be had of the stage, and the lights are so arranged that each expression of the actors can be discerned without straining the eye." 29 November 1867, p. 1, c. 4, afternoon edition.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Edwin L. Jewell, *Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated* (New Orleans: Crescent City Illustrated, 1873), 119.

¹² *The New Orleans Times*, 6 October 1866, p. 4, c. 2.

JEWELL'S CRESCENT CITY ILLUSTRATED.**NATIONAL THEATRE,**

Corner of Baronne and Perdido Streets, New Orleans.

Figure 2
Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated, New Orleans, Crescent City Illustrated, 1873,
p. 119

the wall. Besides these supports there are numerous other heavy iron pillars scattered about through the lower story, and connect with others in each tier above. Massive log chains pass through each partition wall, and the main timbers fit into the walls and rest on blocks of marble which are let in for the purpose, and each one is securely braced and anchored.¹³

On both sides of the entrance foyer were administrative offices for the theatre. A double staircase led to the parquet and dress circle levels, with a balcony over the vestibule. A tall, wide high hallway separated the foyer from the seating area, which was in an elliptical shape, and according to the report by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, the impression was very comfortable, friendly, and elegant in style. From the foyer to the middle of the orchestra were two rows leading to the proscenium, with 272 reclining seats in the orchestra. On each side of the orchestra were five boxes, with capacity for four persons each. Gilded pillars supported the dress circle, which consisted of a double row of box seats, again accommodating four people each. The third floor, or second balcony, was separated from the dress circle, and instead of box seats, there were four rows of comfortable red velvet benches. On the fourth level was a roomy gallery.

To the right and left of the proscenium were six box seats, each reported to be roomy, luxuriously and tastefully appointed. The boxes were impressive, framed by heavy silk damask drapes, bordered with gold accents, which harmonized with the pretty curtain of the stage, which was painted by Rehunech and Sons.¹⁴

Each seat in the house was reported to offer an unobstructed view of the stage. The acoustics were said to be good, allowing all text to reach each spectator.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ *Daily Picayune*, 23 November 1866, p. 2, c. 1.

White walls were emphasized by gilding and the red velvet of the seats. The ceiling was painted with frescoes, and a round dome provided an airy height for ventilation. Lighting was supplied by eighty heavily gilded candelabras,¹⁵ running lengthwise in the four galleries. Of special beauty was the lyre motif on the candelabras, which came from Herr Th. Löffler's warehouse.

Public safety as well as comfort was a priority, and the architects went to great lengths for the time to assure sufficient fire escape, providing numerous doors on each level leading to wide hallways and some twenty floor-length glass doors all around the gallery on the second floor leading outside. For fire control, six giant water containers each three feet deep were housed on the third and fourth floors.

Some renovations were reported over the years. In the fall of 1867, the two side stair cases leading to the dress circle were

entirely demolished on account of their inconvenient steepness and narrowness. The dress circle will hereafter be reached by a double flight of steps, which unite about fifteen feet above the floor, and are ascended from the left side of the main entrance. . . . The new stairs, being large and roomy, with a gentle inclination, afford ascent as well as facilitating easy ingress and egress. This will make the National one of the most comfortable theaters in the United States.¹⁶

Interior renovations also were done in the Fall of 1870, when, after a two-year dormancy, the National Theatre experienced a revival and produced three consecutive full-fledged seasons. It seems that the war between France and German in 1870 and the unification of Germany in 1871 evoked in the New Orleans German community a renewed patriotism for the fatherland¹⁷ and stimulated interest in German nationalism in New Orleans, and particularly through the National Theatre.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶*The New Orleans Daily Crescent*, 28 September 1867, p. 1, c. 3.

¹⁷*Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 8 October 1870, p. 8, c. 2.

Various performances of questionable quality and nature were reported to have been performed in the theatre in the mid-1870's, and the theatre was often referred to as the Globe Theatre¹⁸ or the Bijou Theatre,¹⁹ although the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* and often the *Daily Picayune* continued to refer to the building as the National Theatre until it was sold in 1880 to Philip Werlein, a vendor of pianos and published music, and the name of the house changed to Werlein Hall. On the cover of a publication published by Werlein's business dating from the 1880's, the engraving from *Jewell's Crescent City Illustrated*, 1873, appears with the name "Werlein Hall" superimposed over "National Theatre."²⁰ After Werlein's purchase, the theatre was used only occasionally for school commencements, church festivals, and local music recitals,²¹ and at least one operatic production.²² The building burned in the early morning hours of on July 2, 1887, the result of a fire in a shoe store on the lower floor of the structure.²³

¹⁸ *Daily Picayune*, 2 July 1887, p. 2, c. 1.

¹⁹ Henry C. Richter, *Standard History of New Orleans* (Chicago, Lewis Publishers, 1900), 467.

²⁰ Scrapbook of Philip Werlein, Philip Werlein, Ltd, presently in Werlein's for Music in Metairie, Louisiana.

²¹ *Daily Picayune*, 2 July 1887, p. 2, c. 2.

²² Lenis Joseph Richard, Jr., in "The Development of Opera in New Orleans from the Civil War to the Burning of the French Opera House in 1919" (Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, 1959, p. 99), reports a production of Offenbach's *Grand Duchess of Gerolstein* by a traveling troupe at Werlein Hall in 1884. A production of this nature appears to have been a rarity after 1878.

²³ *Daily Picayune*, 2 July 1887, p. 2, c. 1.

Chapter Three

1866-1867 Season

Most of the operatic works staged by the various resident companies at the National Theatre were operettas containing spoken dialogue. Except for occasional opera productions mounted by various local companies at the National Theatre, completely sung operas were performed generally by traveling troupes. Also, several types of plays produced at the National Theatre, including *Posse mit Gesang* (burlesque with song), *Liederspiel* (play with songs), *Gesangposse* (sung burlesque), and *Lebensbild mit Gesang* (biographical sketch with song), included musical numbers interspersed with spoken dialogue. However, these works are outside the scope of this monograph, and only those designated "opera" or "operetta" in the score or labeled as such in one of the consulted newspapers are included.²⁴

For the premiere season at the National Theatre, Gustav Ostermann, artistic director for the first two seasons, engaged singers and actors from Germany, New York and locally for the productions. Music directors were Robert Meyer and Carl Kerssen, and an orchestra of twelve players was hired. Kerssen is mentioned on several occasions in reviews of the *Tägliche deutsche*

²⁴ The problem is compounded by the various newspapers, particularly the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, referring to a work by different genres. For example, *Lumpazi Vagabundus*, a work performed often throughout the nineteenth century by various German theatrical companies in New Orleans, is called "vaudeville," "Posse mit Gesang," "Zauberposse" and even on one occasion "operette" by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*.

Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer, the first work documented in this monograph is also problematic concerning its classification. In the 1866-1867 announcements in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, the work is labeled "Vaudeville" and "Vaudeville Posse," but in announcements for the work in 1871 it is labeled "operette."

Zeitung as conductor; Meyer composed a march for the 22 November 1866 premiere performance of the theatre, *Die Karlsschüler* by Loub.²⁵

The first operetta of the season, *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer*, by E. Stiegmänn, opened 18 December, and was performed along with two other works, *Rezept gegen Schwiegermütter*²⁶ (*Recipe against Mother-in-laws*) and *Cachucca*. Cast members included Antoinette Fehringer (Guste), engaged from the Victoria Theatre in Berlin,²⁷ was a pianist as well as a singer, and said to be a piano student of Franz Liszt. The remainder of the cast included Julius Ascher (Doctor Hippe); Caroline Lindemann (Aurora); Dora Rolff (Clara), from the St. Georg Tivoli in Hamburg; Carl Frücke (Fischer) from the Stadttheater in Königsberg; Richard Kaps (Amandus) also from the St. Georg Tivoli in Hamburg; and Ferdinand Göbel and Albert Rolff as the *erster Träger* and *zweiter Träger* respectively. Fehringer also performed piano selections during the two intermissions, including “*Grand Valse Brillante*,” a Liszt piano transcription from Gounod’s *Faust*, a fantasy from Wagner’s *Lohengrin*, also by Liszt, and a Chopin nocturne.²⁸

The next operetta produced in the season was *Liebchen auf dem Dache*, by August Conradi,²⁹ which premiered 28 December to a half-full house due to bad weather.³⁰ Of that performance, the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that the singers were in good voice and each musical number was applauded. The cast included Ascher as Polycarp Schnabelius, Kaps as Serafin, Lindemann as Frau

²⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 22 November 1866, p. 1, c. 4.

²⁶ According to the announcement in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, *Rezept gegen Schwiegermütter* was written by King Ludwig II of Bavaria.

²⁷ An announcement on p. 1, c. 4 of the 21 November edition of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* gives a listing of the cast and crew of the 1866-1867 season, complete with theatres where non-local cast members had been previously engaged.

²⁸ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 18 December 1866, p. 5, c. 3.

²⁹ The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* often spells the composer’s name “Conradin.” The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* gives the spelling “Conradi,” which is the spelling used in this monograph.

³⁰ *Daily Picayune*, 30 December 1866, p. 2, c. 1, morning edition.

Holst, Fehringer as Martina, and Herr Kricki³¹ as a *Nachtwächter*. Carl Kerssen conducted, and was given credit for the good ensemble between the orchestra and the actors.³²

Liebchen auf dem Dache was repeated on 29 December, 1 and 4 January, and 12 April. Of the New Year's Day performance, the review hailed the performances of Fehringer, Kaps, Ascher and Lindemann as superbly sung and acted.³³ The 12 April performance of *Liebchen auf dem Dache* was a benefit performance for Caroline Lindemann. She and Fehringer were praised for having played their respective roles "to the greatest advantages. Ascher and Kaps sang and played their part to the satisfaction of everyone."³⁴

German versions of the French operettas of Jacques Offenbach became standard fare at the National Theatre, and several of his works were performed in the premiere season. 14 January 1867 saw the opening of his *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne*. According to the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, the performance was well-received and generated several curtain calls, and brought the remark that a performance of this caliber could not be found on any other German/ American stage in the country. This production presented the musical debut of Julie Rühmann (Liese), hired from the Stadttheater in Hamburg,³⁵ and she was described as having a sweet voice with a full yet light sound.³⁶ Maestro Kerssen reduced the orchestration for the score from forty to twelve players, and was again given credit by both newspaper reviewers for achieving good ensemble between the orchestra and the stage. Kaps received praise

³¹ Full names or a first initial are given when available. German titles (Herr, Frau, Fräulein) found in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* are given in this monograph when only last names are available. Also, roles are listed only when singers are identified with specific roles.

³² *Daily Picayune*, 30 December 1866, p. 2, c. 1, morning edition.

³³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 3 January 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

³⁴ *Daily Picayune*, 13 April 1867, p. 5, c. 4.

³⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 21 November 1866, p. 1, c. 4.

³⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 16 January 1867, p. 8, c. 2.

for his singing the role of Peter with such superb voice and characterization that it seemed that the role were written for him. Dora Rolff (Catharina) was described as somewhat weak vocally, but that with a little more training she would make an outstanding soubrette. The *Daily Picayune* reviewer, on the other hand, praised her singing, remarking that she sang with a fresh, clear and sonorous voice which increased in strength in the lower part of her register. Antoinette Fehringer's portrayal of Martina succeeded completely. Julie Rühmann ended the evening with a well-executed Hungarian character dance.³⁷

Die Verlobung bei der Laterne was repeated 16, 21, 23, 24, 26 January, 7 February, and 20 April. The 21, 24, and 26 January performances of *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* were presented with *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer*.³⁸ The reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* hailed the 24 January performance of *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer* as excellent, but the rendition of *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* on this occasion was not as good as the first three performances, due to a throat affliction suffered by Kaps. However, all three women, Lindemann, Rolff and Fehringer, were again stellar. The "fighting duet" between the latter two was again quite well done. The reviewer commented that Rolff's portrayal of Catharina seemed to grow stronger with each performance.³⁹

The 26 January performances of *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer* (the performance of which the reviewer hoped would be the last of this work,

³⁷ *Daily Picayune*, 15 January 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

³⁸ Also performed with the two works on the 21 and 24 January evenings was *Er ist nicht eifersüchtig*, a *Lustspiel* by Alex Elz; the 26 January performance also included *Rezept gegen Schwiegermütter*.

³⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 25 January 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

which he deemed of lesser quality than those of Offenbach⁴⁰) and *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* were both reported to have been very good, but not without some mishaps. The curtain opened in the middle of the overture to *Verlobung*, an occurrence that, according to the reviewer, should not have happened in the fifth performance of a work. On a positive note, however, the reviewer commented that he hoped that *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* would remain in the repertoire of the National Theatre.⁴¹

The 7 February performance of *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* received a short mention in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. The “fighting duet” between Rolff and Fehringier again had to be repeated. The reviewer also commended Maestro Kerssen, and remarked that his efforts deserved a compliment.⁴²

An Italian touring opera company, the Roncari company, performed at the National Theatre 18-25 February,⁴³ and local activity was suspended for that tour. Works performed included *La Traviata*, *La Favorita*, *Martha*, *Ione*, *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Sonnombula*, and *Don Pasquale*. Since all of these operas were performed in Italian, the particulars of that tour will not be included here for they lie outside the scope of this monograph.

After the Italian tour at the theatre, the next operetta to be performed was Offenbach’s *Orpheus in der Unterwelt*. This work seems to have been the most ambitious undertaking for the local company in its first season at the new theatre, and preparation for it received publicity in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*

⁴⁰ Regarding the quality of repertoire, John Nau berated the National Theatre and the German community in New Orleans in general for producing musical works of lesser quality. Apparently the reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* also hoped for better fare, and the next season saw the inclusion of two full-scale operas. Even *Orpheus und der Unterwelt*, which received considerable attention in the paper, was reported to have a trivial and unimportant libretto (*Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 24 February 1867, p. 4, c. 1).

⁴¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 27 January 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

⁴² *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 8 February 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

⁴³ Both the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* and the *Daily Picayune* reviewed the various performances of that company. The company also performed at the French Opera House during its stay in New Orleans.

for several days before the initial performance on 1 March, including reports of rehearsals. The work received a total of seven performances, and ticket prices were raised for this production. Opening night was sold out, and the performance elicited generally high praise in a brief review from the critic of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, commenting that except for a few minor opening night mishaps and some lack of precision expected in the premiere of a complicated work, it was a great success. Maestro Kerssen and the orchestra and chorus were given only praise and acknowledgement.⁴⁴

A more lengthy review appeared on 4 March, and again gave credit to the conductor for the success of the performance and for the commendable ensemble. Fehringer was ill and did not do her usual justice to the role. Carl Wedderin's portrayal of Pluto was without blemish, and was hailed as the best performance of the season to date; the reviewer reported having seen his performing the role in Germany. Kaps acted and sang the role of Orpheus well. Rühmann was too serious as *die Össentliche Meinung* and the reviewer felt that she should have played the role more comically. Ascher as Jupiter did not follow standard portrayals of the role. Lindemann (Jane) played her role with her usual competence. Rolff (Diana) sang well, but was found lacking in life and humor. Wilhelmine Rohde was criticized as not rendering the most convincing portrayal of Venus, and it was said that she looked funny doing the Can-can. Carl Koppe as Mars needed more gallantry instead of the roughness with which he played the character. Emil Laßwitz displayed remarkable agility in the role of Merkur. Theodor Frücke presented a pleasing dry comedy as Hans Styr, but was chastised for having been allowed so much freedom in the

⁴⁴ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 2 March 1867, p. 8, c. 1-3. (The length of the article comes from the story of the work related in detail.)

couplets. The costumes as well as the choreography, set design, scenery, and direction were said to be so good that nothing better could be expected.⁴⁵

After the third performance of *Orpheus* the price of tickets was lowered to the original standard price set at the beginning of the season.⁴⁶ The fourth performance was reported to be better and generally more expressive than the previous performances, with only a few problems.⁴⁷

The performance of *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* on 7 March was a benefit for Maestro Kerssen. Emilie Mandelslohe (role not mentioned) was praised as outstanding. Julius Ascher (Jupiter) was criticized for improvising variations in the dialogue in the second act which brought confusion to the dialogue. Wilhelmine Rhode (Venus) appeared for the first time in a Greek costume, which was to her advantage, according to the review. It appears that some technical problems remained, particularly the lightning in the fourth act that still came too soon, for which the stage manager received blame.⁴⁸

The review of the 17 March performance of *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* praised Ascher and Wedderin as outstanding for bringing new jokes to the dialogue. The chorus, however, was not as precise as had been, and "left something to be desired."⁴⁹

On April 5, *Preciosa*, a *Schauspiel* (one of many terms used to denote a drama) by Pius Alex. Wolf, for which Carl Maria von Weber wrote incidental music, was presented. Although not an opera or operetta, the work is mentioned due to the stature of Weber, a significant German opera composer and one that figures prominently into the history of the National Theatre with

⁴⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 4 March 1867, p. 8, c. 2-3

⁴⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 7 March 1867, p. 8, c. 2.

⁴⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 5 March, p. 8, c. 3.

⁴⁸ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 8 March 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

⁴⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 18 March 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

numerous performances of *Der Freischütz*. *Preciosa* had been performed many times previously in New Orleans since the inception of German theatre in 1839.

The initial season of the National Theatre ended 30 April.

Chapter Four

1867-1868 Season

The 1867-1868 season³⁰ was a short season for the local company at the National Theatre, opening 3 November and closing in mid-December. It is difficult to determine why the season was so brief, for there are no available issues of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* that gave details of the performances or of the administrative activities of the theatre. Financial problems and discontent with the repertoire seem to have been ever present at the National Theatre, and it is conceivable that both contributed to the shortness of the season, for in 1869, when efforts were begun to revive a local company at the theatre, both issues were of primary concern.

Gustav Ostermann was again artistic director of the company for the season. An outstanding feature of the season was the production of three full-scale operas, *Der Freischütz* by Weber, *Martha* by Flotow and Carl Lortzing's *Czar und Zimmermann*, as well as a familiar operetta, Offenbach's *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne*.

The season opened 3 November with Lortzing's opera *Czar und Zimmermann*, a work previously produced in New Orleans by the German community. The only information available is a list from an announcement in the *Daily Picayune* of the cast members who made their first appearance at the theatre and includes Sophia Dziuba, Eliza Gisebele, Anton Graff, Conrad Müller, Herren Bach and Hafner.³¹

³⁰ Issues of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* from Fall 1867 through 31 December 1868 are unavailable. The *Daily Picayune* is the only available source to report significantly on the 1867-1868 season.

³¹ *Daily Picayune*, 2 November 1867, p. 5, c. 4, morning edition. Only the last names of Bach and Hafner are available.

A major undertaking for the local company was the production of Weber's *Der Freischütz*, which opened 15 November. Antoinette Fehringer, engaged again for this season, sang Agathe. Dziuba sang the role of Anne and repeated that role with the touring Lotti Troupe's performance of that opera heard later that season at the National Theatre. Max was sung by Müller, the Hermit by Bach, and Caspar by Graff, who also appeared with the Lotti Troupe in February. The usual twelve-member orchestra was expanded to forty players.⁵²

Der Freischütz was repeated on 17 and 20 December. The attendance for the 17 November performance was good, according to the *Daily Picayune*. The review commented that the singing was "all that could be desired."⁵³ Fehringer (Agathe) was hailed as a "most accomplished actress, and a most delightful vocalist."⁵⁴ The review for the 20 November performance mentioned that the singing of Fehringer, Graff and Müller was "much applauded."⁵⁵

The third opera of the season, *Martha* by Flotow, opened 29 November, with Fehringer as Lady Harriet, Dziuba as Nancy, Bach as Lord Tristan, Müller as Lionel, and Graff as Plunkett.⁵⁶ The opera was repeated 1 and 2 December.

Offenbach's *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* opened on November 21, and received one other performance on December 19. The cast for the 19 December performance included Fehringer, Dziuba, Gisebele, and Müller.⁵⁷ That performance marked the final operatic performance by a local company at the National Theatre for three years.

⁵² *Daily Picayune*, 16 November 1867, p. 5, c. 4.

⁵³ *Daily Picayune*, 18 November 1867, p. 8, c. 1, morning edition.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Daily Picayune*, 21 November 1867, p. 8, c. 1, morning edition.

⁵⁶ *Daily Picayune*, 29 November 1867, p. 1, c. 4, afternoon edition.

⁵⁷ *Daily Picayune*, 19/20 December 1867, p. 5, c. 4.

The Lotti Grand German Opera troupe from New York under the management of H. Grau gave a series of nine performances, 5-16 February. The tour was a huge success, according to the reviews in the *Daily Picayune*. Even though productions at the National Theatre had received generally brief attention from the *Daily Picayune* since its opening, this touring company was given consistent notices along with the French Opera House, the St. Charles Theatre, the Academy of Music Theatre, and the Varieties Theatre. Apparently the singers were of the highest caliber, for the reviews were extensive and positive. Only praise was bestowed upon the singers and occasionally to the conductor, orchestra, and chorus. The theatre was full for most of the performances. As is the case with contemporary touring companies, singers would often sing contrasting and demanding roles on consecutive nights without rest, but many seemed to render successful, noteworthy performances night after night.

Operas advertised in an announcement dated 5 February in the *Daily Picayune* included *Martha*, *Faust*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Der Freischütz*, *Fra diavolo*, *Stradella*, *Masaniello*, and *Die Tochter der Regiment*,⁵⁸ and *Fidelio*. Of those named, however, only *Martha*, *Faust*, *Der Freischütz*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Stradella* were performed.

Martha opened the troupe's engagement on 12 February. Even though the weather was inclement, the house was crowded. According to the review, Clara Lang's (Harriet) singing and acting were very artistic and her voice "very touching."⁵⁹ Marie Friederici (Nancy), the top billed singer of the troupe, was given the following remark regarding her voice: "Miss Friderici [sic] sings a contralto of great compass, and acts the part of a soubrette with great skill."⁶⁰

⁵⁸ This work appears with other titles in subsequent issues of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, including *Die Regimentstochter* and *Marie, die Tochter der Regiment*.

⁵⁹ *Daily Picayune*, 6 February 1867, p. 8, c. 1, morning edition.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Signor Lotti (Lionel), for whom the troupe was named, had a lyric tenor voice of great richness and a pleasing softness. Anton Graff (Judge"), heard at the National Theatre the previous fall, was said to be "an effective basso buffo, with great power."⁶¹ The chorus and orchestra, conducted by Groscurt were both very precise, all contributing to the excellent ensemble which was expected "from the legitimate opera."⁶² *Martha* was repeated 16 February, with Franz Himmer singing the role of Lionel.⁶³

Gounod's *Faust* was presented the following evening, 6 February, to a "large and brilliant audience."⁶⁴ Performing the role of Faust was Himmer, the "tenor originally selected by Gounod himself to sing in this opera,"⁶⁵ and Gounod himself was reputed to have coached Himmer, whose singing at this performance was pleasing to the audience. Friederici in the role of Marguerite was no less pleasing, being as fine an actress as she was a singer. Apparently Friederici was an artist of the first caliber, for she received repeated accolades. The reviewer described her voice as one of great compass, clear and sweet, and "the lower full of melody."⁶⁶ *Faust* was repeated 13 February and again well received, with Friederici earning a special mention as portraying a "well nigh matchless character of 'Marguerita.'"⁶⁷

Stradella by Flotow was given on 7 February for "a large and appreciative audience, composed principally of our music-loving German Friends, whose taste is always correct and cultivated."⁶⁸ Lang sang the role of Leonora "with unexceptional feeling and spirit."⁶⁹ Himmer in the title role was well-liked by

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ *Daily Picayune*, 16 February 1867, p. 8, c. 2.

⁶⁴ *Daily Picayune*, 7 February 1868, p. 8, c.1.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ *Daily Picayune*, 14 February 1868, p. 8, c. 1.

⁶⁸ *Daily Picayune*, 8 February 1868, p. 8, c. 1

⁶⁹ Ibid.

the reviewer who commented that Stradella was "one of the best things we have seen him do" that combined charming singing, admirable acting and a good appearance on stage.⁷⁰

On 9 February Weber's *Der Freischütz* was given to a crowded house. The review stated that Friederici as Agathe sang and acted well, and Lotti as Max also rendered a fine performance.⁷¹ *Der Freischütz* was repeated on 13 February and was substituted for *Fra diavolo*, which was canceled due to the "sudden indisposition" of Heinrich Steinecke.⁷² The performance received favorable comments, and the second-act trio between Himmer, Friederici and Dziuba was highly praised as a "rare musical gem."⁷³ Himmer substituted for Lotti, who was also indisposed.⁷⁴

For the first time in New Orleans Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* was performed on 11 February. Most tickets were reportedly sold in advance in anticipation of this New Orleans premiere. The review hailed the performance as a "decided success" without giving any mention of the nature of the music which was unfamiliar to the audience. Friederici as Pamina was the only singer to receive mention, and, on this occasion, she "achieved a new triumph . . . in the role of 'Pamina.'"⁷⁵ *Die Zauberflöte* was repeated 14 February, but no review of the performance was given in the article that appeared the following morning. Only a few comments regarding Friederici's enthusiastic appeal to the audience were written.

Again, a performance of *Fra diavolo*, scheduled for 15 February, was canceled, this time shortly before curtain, with the theatre already filled. The *Daily Picayune* reported only that a misunderstanding among the members of

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ *Daily Picayune*, 10 February 1867, p. 1, c. 4, afternoon edition.

⁷² *Daily Picayune*, 13 February 1867, p. 8, c. 2, morning edition.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ *Daily Picayune*, 12 February 1867, p. 8, c. 1.

the troupe led to the cancellation.⁷⁶ As previously mentioned, *Martha* was performed on 16 February, this time as a substitute for *Fra diavolo*.

The troupe gave two more performances in New Orleans, another *Faust* and another *Die Zauberflöte*, but both of these were done at the St. Charles Theatre. The dispute on 15 February as well as possible financial problems may have contributed to the company's moving to the St. Charles Theatre. The performance of *Martha* on 16 February marked the end of the 1867-1868 season.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Chapter Five

1868-1869 Season

There was no local company operating in the 1868-1869 season. The only operatic activity reported in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* for this season was a return of the touring German opera company that had visited the National Theatre the previous winter. The company's name had been changed to *Marie Friederici's Große deutsche Opern-Gesellschaft* but was still under the management of H. Grau and was essentially the same company as the Lotti Grand German Opera company that had visited the National Theatre the previous season. Most of the singers from the Lotti company were on the roster of the new company.

The tour began with a performance of *Martha* by Flotow 30 December. There was a "brilliant concourse of attentive listeners" in attendance in spite of inclement weather.⁷⁷ Clara Lang-Ziegler (who appeared in the previous season as Clara Lang) and Marie Friederici sang the roles of Lady Harriet and Nancy respectively, and their performances elicited so many encores that they eventually had to be "neglected." Franz Himmer (Lionel) gave a well-rounded performance, and Joseph Weinlich, Heinrich Steinecke and Wilhelm Bach contributed to the success of the performance. The chorus and orchestra under the direction of Maestro Predigam, "sang and played with audable [sic] precision."⁷⁸

Martha was repeated 8 January, and a good house was in attendance despite rain. All the cast members listed in the previous performance's review

⁷⁷ *Daily Picayune*, 31 December 1868, p. 8, c. 2.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

received favorable mentions in the *Daily Picayune* review, especially Himmer, who was hailed as brilliant in the role of Lionel.⁷⁹

The performance of *Der Freischütz* on 31 December was well attended and the reviewer for the *Daily Picayune* remarked that the attendance reminded him "forcibly of the good times, *ante bellum*."⁸⁰ The review praised Friederici's singing and acting and her portrayal of Agathe, which showed a "thorough study of the character."⁸¹ Clara Lang-Ziegler (Anne) was commended for adapting her voice well for the role of a soubrette.⁸² Franz Himmer as Max demonstrated a "fine study. His mobile features [assisted] him in his reading of such acting and singing."⁸³ Joseph Weinlich's and Wilhelm Bach's renditions of Caspar and the Monk respectively "could hardly be excelled."⁸⁴ Heinrich Steinecke's Ottocar received special praise for his excellent characterization that was a "feature of the entertainment."⁸⁵ The chorus and orchestra, under Maestro Predigam, were excellent. The scenery, imported from New York, was "really beautiful."⁸⁶

The second performance of *Der Freischütz* on 9 January was described by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* as great and complemented the previous performances in this tour.⁸⁷ The *Daily Picayune* reported that Friederici

⁷⁹ *Daily Picayune*, 9 January 1869, p. 8, c. 2.

⁸⁰ *Daily Picayune*, 1 January 1869, p. 3, c. 4-5.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid. This statement gives some insight into the demands placed on a singer engaged in a touring opera company. An example of the wide diversity of other roles that Lang-Ziegler performed in the 1868-1869 season included "The Queen of the Night" in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* and Leonora in Verdi's *Il Trovatore*!

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 10 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

(Agathe) was “perfectly splendid” in the prayer scene, and that Lang-Ziegler (Anne) “sustained her role also in the most excellent manner.”⁸⁸

The theatre was filled to capacity for *Fra diavolo* New Year’s Day, reminding the critic of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* of former better days at the National Theatre. Himmer’s (most likely in the title role) singing was very good, even though his acting left something to be desired. Lang-Ziegler’s performance (again, no character named), however, was the highlight of the evening. Heinrich Steinecke and Bach added to the generally good mood of the performance and the house with their portrayals of the two bandits.⁸⁹

According to the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* the second *Fra diavolo* on 6 January surpassed the first performance, and was viewed as the best performance so far in the tour. All the soloists sang very well, and the chorus was excellent in this performance. The success of the total ensemble gave an effect which was hardly imagined possible.⁹⁰

Both the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* and the *Daily Picayune* reported that first performance of *Faust 2* on January was a grand success, and again the house was full. Marie Friederici (Gretchen) and Franz Himmer (in the title role) received the high acclaim that the New Orleans public had seldom seen two such complete artists side by side. Joseph Weinlich’s successful portrayal of Mephisto reinforced the public’s favorable acquaintance with Weinlich from the previous season. The rest of the cast and the chorus were awarded recognition, and the orchestra was reported as valiant, most of the time.⁹¹ *Faust* was

⁸⁸ *Daily Picayune*, 10 January 1869, p. 8, c. 2.

⁸⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 3 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

⁹⁰ Statements such as “the best performance to date” and “the finest performance of this work ever heard in this city” are frequent; such superlatives should not be taken too literally.

⁹¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 5 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1. At the end of the review an announcement of the following night’s performance of *Die Zauberflöte* reported that the opera was in five acts!

repeated 10 January, with Johan Armand substituting for an ill Lang-Ziegler in the role of Siebel.⁹²

Die Zauberflöte on the 3 January also filled the theatre. The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that Clara Lang-Ziegler (Queen of the Night") was in exceptional voice, and sang with artistry and grace. Marie Friederici, cast as both Pamina and Papagena, was well-liked and received a great deal of applause. Joseph Weinlich as Sarastro was praised for the strength and clarity with which he sang the role. Papageno was billed as one of Heinrich Steinecke's best roles. Wilhelm Bach, who seemed to have gained in strength and volume since the previous season, was said to be an excellent bass.⁹³

The opera was repeated 5 January, and again Friederici was praised for her portrayals of Pamina and Papagena. Steinecke's Papageno was performed in the "merriest mood possible."⁹⁴ Himmer and Weinlich also received positive mentions.

On 4 January *Stradella* by Flotow was presented and well attended in spite of bad weather. The review for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* said that Franz Himmer as Stradella gave a truly masterful performance, particularly in the third act, which was performed with much warmth and emotion.⁹⁵ The reviewer for the *Daily Picayune* also praised Himmer very highly, contending that his portrayal of Stradella surpassed all of his previous efforts.⁹⁶ The chorus received a favorable mention in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* which commented that the performance was best to date in this tour of the German opera company.⁹⁷

⁹² *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 12 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1. "Siebel" is a mezzo-soprano role.

⁹³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 5 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

⁹⁴ *Daily Picayune*, 6 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

⁹⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 5 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

⁹⁶ *Daily Picayune*, 5 January 1869, p. 8, c. 2.

⁹⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 5 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

The company's performance of *Il Trovatore* on 12 January was the first performance of that opera in German in the United States.⁹⁸ Friederici (Azucena)⁹⁹ and Lang-Ziegler (Leonora) both sang with precision and artistry, which led to great applause. Himmer as Manrico enraptured all present. Steinecke's voice in the role of Count da Luna was not large enough for the difficult role according to the review but he rendered a commendable performance never the less. The chorus and orchestra were better than the reviewer expected. The scenery was well arranged, and the company as a whole received praise for the performance.¹⁰⁰

After staging productions at other theatres in New Orleans in this tour and traveling to Texas and back, the troupe performed a second *Il Trovatore* at the National Theatre on 25 January. The reviews, although contrasting, both give the impression that this performance was not of the same high quality as the previous performance of the work on 12 January. The *Daily Picayune* gave the more favorable review of the two reviews, and reported that the performance was creditable in view of the fact that the troupe had arrived from Texas just a few hours before the performance. Johan Armand, substituting for Himmer, who was too indisposed to sing, sang the role of Manrico "in a way which gained for him frequent applause from the critical audience present."¹⁰¹

The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, however, reported that the performance was miserable and chaotic, with Marie Friederici's performance of Azucena the only favorable aspect of the performance. Hissing was detected in the house which was not full on this occasion. The whole ensemble except Friederici

⁹⁸ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 13 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

⁹⁹ This is another example of a singer performing with a touring company singing a wide variety of roles. In addition to "Azucena," Marie Friederici also sang "Pamino" in *Die Zauberflöte* and "Marguerite" (or "Gretchen," as the role is listed in German productions) in *Faust*.

¹⁰⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 13 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

¹⁰¹ *Daily Picayune*, 26 January 1869, p. 1, c. 5.

seemed to be suffering from laryngitis. In place of the ailing Himmer, Armand sang Manrico in French and Weinlich sang in Italian,¹⁰² while the rest of the cast sang in German. The orchestra and chorus, which had only five men, were not good, and technical aspects were poor.¹⁰³ In view of the poor vocal state of the cast reported for this performance, it is not surprising that after such a concentrated performance schedule that allowed little or no rest periods, the cast was not at its best for this performance, for the work was in many respects the most vocally demanding work performed on the tour.

The 25 January performance of *Il Trovatore* brought an end to the 1868-1869 season. An article in the 26 January issue of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that there was general discontent among the German community that the season did not offer enough variety, particularly in that there was no operetta produced, and that the next season would provide variety. The article also stated that a group of subscribers under the directorship of Emil Laßwitz would assume the management of the National Theatre, and that Laßwitz would go to Germany that spring to engage a company for the season, 1869-1870.¹⁰⁴ However, in an article a few days later, it was announced that F. E. Diederich, a director of German productions in New Orleans during the mid-1850's, would take over the directorship of the National Theatre and would go to Germany to engage a company for *Posse, Singspiel, Operetta* and *Burlesque* if he were offered a contract. According to the article, fraudulent activity in the past had given the theatre a bad reputation, and Diederich was seen as a respectable figure who would put the National Theatre back on track.¹⁰⁵ It was announced in an article dated 18 May that Diederich had indeed signed a

¹⁰² This is a curious statement considering that no mention was made in the reviews of the earlier performance of *Il Trovatore* of Joseph Weinlich's singing the role in Italian.

¹⁰³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 26 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

¹⁰⁴ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 26 January 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

¹⁰⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 21 February 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

contract and would go to Germany to recruit singers for the coming season.¹⁰⁶
However, no local company materialized for a 1869-1870 season.

¹⁰⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 9 May 1869, p. 8, c. 1.

Chapter Six

Winter 1870 Season

As in the previous season, there was no local company functioning at the National Theatre for the 1869-1870 season. The only productions in what normally would have been that season were performed in late January through early February of 1870 by the returning *Große deutsche Oper* troupe under the management of H. Grau.¹⁰⁷ There were several new singers in the troupe as well as many who had appeared with it in previous seasons.

Because of the disappointments of the past few years regarding local activity (from late 1868 through the winter of 1870), the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* stated that the theatre was not well patronized for the touring troupe, according to the reviews. However, the opening performance of *Die Zauberflöte* on 23 January was well attended, in spite of terrible weather. The reviewer of the *Daily Picayune* reported that the performance was not of the quality expected of the troupe due probably to "effects of recent travel."¹⁰⁸ Amelia Jackson as the Queen of the Night was the most indisposed, with only her highest notes unaffected. Bertha Johannsen, however, was a wonderful Pamina, and received frequent applause. The reviewer commented that Sophia Dziuba, in her third season with the company, had developed considerably as a singer and a performer since the previous season. The scene between Dziuba (Papagena) and Wilhelm Formes (Papageno) was so well received that it had to be repeated. Formes' bubbling humor that he displayed in the role of

¹⁰⁷ The *Daily Picayune* reported that Marie Friederici, "the favorite prima donna of this troupe," was in New York but would shortly join the company in New Orleans. *Daily Picayune*, 24 January 1870, p. 2, c. 1. However, there was no mention of her presence or of her performing in any subsequent newspaper article.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 25 January 1870, p. 8, c. 1, reported similarly.

Papageno was conveyed to the audience successfully with a distinct, full voice. The trio at the end of what was labeled the third act was noteworthy. The singers of the minor roles helped contribute to the success of the performance as a whole. The chorus was vocally weak but well rehearsed.¹⁰⁹

The company performed *Der Freischütz* on the following night, 24 January. According to the review in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, Franz Himmer's singing (Max) was stronger than in previous seasons. Bertha Johannsen was accomplished as Agathe in every way, and Joseph Weinlich was quite good as Cuno. In the role of Caspar, Formes was not as strong vocally as the role required. (The two latter cast members were switched the day of the performance.) The chorus and orchestra were well rehearsed.¹¹⁰

Less than a full house was in attendance for Boieldieu's *Die weiße Dame* the following evening, 25 January. The reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* commented that the orchestra was very good in the overture but too loud in the first act, compromising a good musical effect between pit and stage. Theodor Habelmann, already well known for his portrayal as George Brown in *Die weiße Dame*,¹¹¹ was hailed as excellent, and "his fine presence, graceful acting and agreeable tenor commanded repeated applause. We [the reviewer of the *Daily Picayune*] have seldom heard the role better sung."¹¹² The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* also praised Habelmann's portrayal of the role, commenting that his voice was clear and that he rendered the role well. Joseph Weinlich and Heinrich Steinecke were in better voice than in the performance of *Die Zauberflöte* earlier in the tour. Bertha Johannsen's Anna was billed as one her best roles. Sophia Dziuba as Jenny was excellent, particularly in the first act. Due to the range of emotion and precision brought to Marguerite's "Spinning

¹⁰⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 25 January 1870 p. 8, c. 1.

¹¹⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 26 January 1870.p. 8, c. 1.

¹¹¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 25 January 1870.p. 8, c. 1.

¹¹² *Daily Picayune*, 26 January 1870, p. 9, c. 2.

Song" by Fräulein Berger's singing, the number had to be repeated. The third act was the high point of the performance, in which Habelmann's "Robin Adair" had to be repeated, with the encore sung in English. The reporter commented that *Die weiße Dame*, which had often been performed at the French Opera House, had never been presented in New Orleans better than by the touring company in this performance.¹¹³ In addition, the *Daily Picayune* added that the choruses were "generally pleasing."¹¹⁴

Die weiße Dame was repeated 28 January with "a larger audience than has heretofore been seen at this theatre,"¹¹⁵ at least probably during this season. The opera as a whole was sung and played with spirit, according to the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. Theodor Habelmann was again excellent, and Sophia Dziuba's graceful acting and rich humor in her portrayal of Jenny added to the evening's success. The chorus received acknowledgement for their performance, and the conductor, von Ghel, was hailed as an excellent, competent conductor.¹¹⁶

On 26 January, Flotow's *Martha* was performed to a half-filled house. The reviewer of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* gave a most enthusiastic account of the performance, citing the success as a result of the ability of German singers to interpret Flotow's score, and that this company's rendition was better than any that had been heard previously at the French Opera House (at least in that season and probably in the reviewer's recollection). Franz Himmer's strength and sweetness of voice were well suited to the role of Lionel. Wilhelm Formes' Plunkett was a perfect match with Himmer's, and their duet in Act I, Scene 5, was excellent. Sophia Dziuba (Nancy) sang with cheerfulness and roundness of sound that was well matched that of Formes' in her first and third acts duets.

¹¹³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 26 January 1870, p. 8, c. 1.

¹¹⁴ *Daily Picayune*, 26 January 1870, p. 9, c. 2.

¹¹⁵ *Daily Picayune*, 29 January 1870, p. 1, c. 7.

¹¹⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 29 January 1870, p. 6, c. 1.

Amelia Jackson's (Henrietta) low range¹¹⁷ was good, but her upper voice was criticized for having a "veil" that did not allow the upper register to reach its full potential. The chorus was criticized for being behind in the first act, but none the less contributed to the ensemble favorably in the remainder of the performance.¹¹⁸ Steinecke and Herr Reichel cleverly portrayed their roles of Tristan" and the Notary respectively.¹¹⁹

For Flotow's *Stradella* on 27 January there was a better audience than for the preceding performances of the tour. Franz Himmer in the title role was "graceful and appropriate."¹²⁰ Himmer's and Bertha Johannsen's (Leonora) voices were well matched, and they were described as "the mellow soprano . . . and the rich plaintive tenor . . . [who] could not have been displayed to better advantage."¹²¹ Habelmann as Barbarino and Formes as Malvolio were highly praised for their duet in the second act, which was "acted admirably and their singing . . . strikingly effective."¹²²

Mozart's *Don Giovanni*,¹²³ which according to the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* was not well known in New Orleans, had been previously performed with dubious results at the French Opera House.¹²⁴ The opera was performed on 30 January for the first time in German in the city, and, in spite of bad weather, was attended by the largest audience for a performance in this tour. The performance was a great success, and the singers, apparently respectful of the

¹¹⁷ Amelia Jackson also sang the "Queen of the Night" in *Die Zauberflöte* in the opening night on 23 January, and to be complimented on her low range sheds light on the diversity of roles in which one in a traveling opera troupe is required to undertake.

¹¹⁸ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 27 January 1870, p. 8, c. 1.

¹¹⁹ *Daily Picayune*, 27 January 1870, p. 8, c. 1.

¹²⁰ *Daily Picayune*, 28 January 1870, p. 8, c. 2.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* consistently refers to this opera as *Don Juan*.

¹²⁴ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 30 January 1870, p. 10, c. 2. An interesting observation by the reviewer stated that the singers had performed in considerably varying weather conditions in this tour, in Chicago in icy and snowy weather, in Cincinnati in rainy weather, and now in New Orleans in rainy weather with a temperature of 65°.

master German composer, seemed to sing with a special affinity for the work. Bertha Johannsen (Donna Anna) sang with fire and emotion, and excelled especially in the revenge duet with Theodor Habelmann (Don Ottavio), who was effective in the duet as well. Johannsen was also praised for her early first-act scenes in which she appeared with Amelia Jackson (Donna Elvira). Habelmann also sang well in both of his arias.¹²⁵ Sophia Dziuba (Zerlina) was praised as a soubrette of the first rank; her duet with Wilhelm Formes (Don Giovanni) and her arias were tastefully and correctly rendered. Only in the last scenes of the first act did she seem to be lacking in vocal power. The reviewer commented that the orchestra was frequently overbearing, and many musical effects were lost due to the orchestra's failure in accompanying the singers properly.¹²⁶

The following evening, 1 February, Beethoven's *Fidelio* was given, and according to the review in the *Daily Picayune*, this was the first performance of the opera in New Orleans.¹²⁷ The reviewer also commented that the music of the opera "is intricate throughout," and as a result, the performance was marred by "many defects." According to the account, Bertha Johannsen (Leonore), Sophia Dziuba (Marcelline), and Joseph Weinlich (Rocco) all "sang with pleasing effect." Franz Himmer (Florestan) received the most praise from the review, which said that he "sang with pleasing effect," and that the "histrionic talent displayed by Himmer was also of the highest order."¹²⁸

The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* praised the opera as a masterwork of the immortal Beethoven. The review commented that the principal singers, Johannsen, Dziuba, Himmer, Weinlich, and Formes (Pizarro) were excellent.

¹²⁵ "Dalla sua pace" was not part of the original score, but was inserted at a later date. Apparently the aria was well established in the performance tradition of this opera in 1870.

¹²⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 1 February 1870, p. 8, c. 1-2.

¹²⁷ *Daily Picayune*, 2 February 1870, p. 1, c. 6. The reviewer called *Fidelio* "a characteristic opera of the great Beethoven."

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

The chorus, however, was criticized for their rendition of the prisoners' chorus in the second act; however, the closing chorus was excellent.¹²⁹

Conradin Kreutzner's *Das Nachtlager in Granada* was performed on 2 February¹³⁰ and judging by the comment in the *Daily Picayune* that "no more beautiful music than this of Kreutzner's [sic] has ever been heard on our boards,"¹³¹ this was perhaps the first performance of this work in New Orleans. The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* praised Formes' (Prinz Regent) performance as the "*Preis des Abends*," commenting that the "*Ein Schütz bin ich*" number and his aria in the second act were well executed and received tumultuous applause. Johannsen (Gabriele) sang well in spite of a cold that affected her higher notes. However, her duet with Habelmannn (Gomez) was splendid vocally, and her aria in the second act was excellent. According the review, the final shepherds' trio, sung by Steinecke, Weinlich, and Reichel, ended the work in a noteworthy manner.¹³² The *Daily Picayune* also praised the final trio as "finely rendered." The musical highlight of the work, according to the reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, was the trio in the second between Gabriele, Prinz Regent and Gomez.

The first New Orleans performance of Halévy's *Die Jüdin* in German occurred on 4 February.¹³³ The review in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that Franz Himmer's (Eleazar) singing and acting were masterful and that he

¹²⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 2 February 1870, p. 8, c. 1.

¹³⁰ The two newspapers gave contrasting reports of the attendance at *Das Nachtlager in Granada*. The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that only a half-full house was in attendance, but the *Daily Picayune* reported that a "larger audience than usual was in attendance."

¹³¹ *Daily Picayune*, 3 February 1870, p. 8, c. 2.

¹³² *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 3 February 1870, p. 8, c. 1.

¹³³ In the announcement of *Fidelio* on 1 February, the *Daily Picayune* reported that Rossini's *Barber of Seville* was to be presented on 3 February, but performance of that work was not recorded by the German troupe.

received thunderous applause for his performance.¹³⁴ His prayer scene in the second act, "*Allnächtiger blicke gnädig*" was brilliant. Amelia Jackson as Eudoria was effective, and the duet between Joseph Weinlich (Cardinal Brogni) and Bertha Johannsen (Rachel) was executed well, even though Johannsen was not at her best vocally. Weinlich's performance showed his capability as a singer, and his voice continued to be as good as it had been in past years. His duet with Himmer was rendered admirably and received a curtain call. Theodor Habelmann as Leopold was excellent, and Heinrich Steinecke (Rüdiger) sang very well. The ensemble between the singers was good, and the reviewer commented that he wished that ensemble this good could be heard at the opera house on "Bourbon Str." (the French Opera House). The chorus performed admirably. The orchestra, on the other hand, was inadequate, according to the reviewer, who complained that the brass was too loud.¹³⁵

The 6 February morning edition of the *Daily Picayune* mentioned that the members of the troupe had experienced financial troubles due to mismanagement by Grau, the impresario of the troupe. It was reported that Grau had "left them in the lurch and short of funds," and that law suits were instituted by the leading singers for "salaries past due." The ticket sales for *Die Jüdin* were "secured by the artists in advance." However, the article announced that the troupe would travel to Mobile for an engagement there on 7 February.¹³⁶

Shortly after the German troupe finished its tour in New Orleans, the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that an effort was once again underway to revitalize local activity at the National Theatre and put it on a sound financial basis, with Oskar Guttman and H. Franks in charge, and that the theatre

¹³⁴ The *Daily Picayune*, 6 February 1870, p. 13, c. 2, also complimented Himmer's performance, commenting that he "displayed histrionic talent of a high order, and a fresh, rich, emotional tenor, admirably adapted to his roles."

¹³⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 6 February 1870, p. 8, c. 2.

¹³⁶ *Daily Picayune*, 6 February 1870, p. 13, c. 2.

would open again with a functioning local company later in the fall of 1870. Apparently there was a move to keep expenditures down, for the article states that the new managers felt that there was no need to recruit from Germany.¹³⁷ This activity did indeed come to fruition, for the next season overshadowed the first two seasons of local activity in production of operettas and also full-scale operas, as well as in the number of performances.

¹³⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 7 February 1870. p. 8, c. 1.

Chapter Seven

1870-1871 Season

After two seasons with no local company at the National Theatre, rejuvenated and enthusiastic supporters of the theatre raised enough interest to gather enough financial backing from a group of German-American patrons in New Orleans to revive a local company at the National Theatre. A resurgence of patriotic spirit for Germany's war with France in 1870 and the subsequent unification of Germany has been largely credited with the rallying of the New Orleans German populace to express its patriotism through a sense of nationalism for the homeland and its interest in German culture in its adopted home in New Orleans.¹³⁸

Oskar Guttman, an actor and director who had worked in Germany and in New York, was appointed artistic director of the National Theatre in the spring of 1870, and, contrary to a statement made earlier in the spring of 1870 that there was no need to recruit from Germany, Guttman did indeed go to Germany in the late summer of 1870 and hired nine singers for the 1870-1871 season.¹³⁹ The 1870-1871 season was scheduled to begin in October, but on the return trip from Germany, Guttman and his recruits encountered a hurricane that delayed their arrival. After they landed in New York, where Guttman

¹³⁸ John Nau in *The German People of New Orleans 185-1900* proposed that "one factor that may have contributed to the appearance of these many plays [197 in 1869-1871], particularly in 1871, when one hundred and twenty-eight different performances were given, was by that time the news had reached the city of the defeat of the French and the founding of the German empire." In fact, an article in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* dating 30 October 1870 which called for financial support of the National Theatre, the issue of German spirit and patriotism that had proved themselves on the battlefields of France was addressed, and called for a similar spirit from the German community in New Orleans, citing the enthusiasm of French community for their brilliant operatic activity at the French Opera House.

¹³⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 8 October 1870, p. 8, c. 2.

hired twelve more singers, another delay resulted from a lack of funds necessary for the remainder of the trip home.¹⁴⁰ Finally the money was raised, and the group reached New Orleans in mid-October.

The revised season opening date of 1 November was again postponed a few days to accommodate the Catholic church holidays of All Saints' and All Souls' Days. The season finally got underway 3 November, and the the first operetta of the season opened 18 November to a full house with the first New Orleans production of Franz von Suppé's *Die schöne Galathee*. Fräulein Maché, a singer recruited from Germany, sang the title role, and according to the review in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* sang and portrayed the title character with "*Feuer und Leben*."¹⁴¹ Lina Waßmann, also from Germany, was likable and funny in the role of Ganymede, especially in the "*Wir Griechen*" couplets. Ferdinand Lauterbach, yet another German recruit, demonstrated a well-trained voice in the role of Pygmalion, and in the aria "O Venus" he showed great vocal flexibility. Ernst Rethwisch, hired from Germany as a director and singer, was reported to have been funny in appearance as Midas, and his acting in general was excellent, particularly in his comical Jewish manner and dialect. Ensemble on stage between singers was quite good, and particularly noteworthy were the first-act duet between Lauterbach and Maché, the "Ruß-duet" between Maché and Waßmann, and the "drinking-song trio." The orchestra, under the direction of Maestro Bh. Greuling, was generally good, with only a few early and late entrances noticed.¹⁴² *Die schöne Galathee* was repeated 21 and 30 November, with the latter performance receiving a brief positive review.

An interesting inclusion in the season was a work with music by Franz von Suppé titled *Mozarts Leben und Tod*, (termed a "*großes melodramatisches*

¹⁴⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 20 September 1870, p. 8, c. 5-6.

¹⁴¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 19 November 1870, p. 8, c. 1.

¹⁴² Ibid.

Tonwerk by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*), whose score is a combination of original music by Suppé and quotations of works by Mozart, including music from one of the violin concerti and the *Requiem*.¹⁴³ The orchestra, which was reinforced for the score, performed well. Variations from a theme from *Don Giovanni* were performed during the first intermission by Maestro Greuling, whose solo violin playing received thunderous applause. The reviewer commented favorably on Suppé's score, but the playwright's (name not mentioned by the reviewer) depiction of Mozart and the script in general were viewed as subordinate to Suppé's score, which the reviewer thought effectively accompanied the script. The review criticized Gustav Commentz's portrayal of Mozart due largely to the age difference of the actor and the young Mozart, as well as his overly melancholic characterization of Mozart. Louise Ungar's presentation of Constanze, however, was favorably received. Rethwisch demonstrated remarkable agility in his playing of the contrasting characters of Schickaneder and Leopold Mozart. The review commented that the costuming was somewhat inaccurate for the period and for economic status of the characters.¹⁴⁴ The work was repeated 5 December.

August Conradi's comic opera *Rübezahl* opened 18 January, the first opera production staged by a local company since the fall of 1867. According to the review, the cast included many untrained singers, but the result was a successful performance never the less. Lauterbach and Waßmann (no character designations given) were in excellent voice, and both of these well-trained singers contributed greatly to the difficult ensemble numbers. Ernst Rethwisch and Carl Fritze both brought a comical vein to the performance. Gustav Commentz, who had never sung in an opera, received credit and praise for his dedication to his character, and even though he was described as not a "true

¹⁴³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 2 December 1870, p. 8, c. 6.

¹⁴⁴ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 3 December 1870, p. 8, c. 5.

singer," the reviewer commenting that he deserved great recognition for his effort. The chorus was given a positive mention for its fine precision in the the first act.¹⁴⁵

Rübezahl was repeated 23 January, and the review in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that the performance was as good as the first, with the exception of one early entrance in the number before the trio. The reviewer advocated the inclusion of opera in the repertoire of the National Theatre and praised Guttman for his enriching the repertoire of the revived National Theatre with this work. He stated that this, another good performance of a difficult opera, was proof that this company was capable of performing opera as well as comic operettas. And even though it was a comic opera, the reviewer contended that *Rübezahl* was more difficult than other works performed in the past and present repertoire of German theatre in New Orleans.¹⁴⁶ This comment for the inclusion of opera in the theatre's repertoire was likely to have been a counter attack on those who constantly criticized the repertoire of the National Theatre. Discontent with repertoire, seemingly constant throughout the history of the National Theatre, as well as financial problems, may well have accounted for the two-and-a-half year lapse of local activity between January 1868 and the fall of 1870 and the succeeding years of 1873 to 1877.

Flotow's operetta *Die Wittwe Grapin* opened on 1 February and was one of the best performances to date in this season, according to the brief mention the work received in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. Waßmann, Rethwisch and Lauterbach sang the lead roles.¹⁴⁷ The work was repeated 17 February, and 7

¹⁴⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 19 January 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁴⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 24 January 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁴⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 17 February 1871, p. 8, c. 1.

and 28 April. A short review of the performance of the latter praised Waßmann's and Lauterbach's singing.¹⁴⁸

The only performance at the National Theatre of Offenbach's *Die Zaubergeige* was a benefit performance for Ernst Rethwisch for 2 February for which there was a full house in attendance. The review in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* criticized the music as being of little importance. To the reviewer Rethwisch's singing sounded strained and his singing in general was subordinate to his acting. On the other hand, Waßmann was excellent and received lively applause. Lauterbach, whose singing and acting left something to be desired in the reviewer's estimation, did not seem comfortable with the role, which was too low for his voice.¹⁴⁹

Preciosa (a *Schauspiel* by Wolf to which Carl Maria von Weber wrote incidental music), performed in the initial season of the theatre and often in the past by German theatrical groups from in New Orleans, was performed on 12 March as a benefit for Minna Warnche. The performance received good reviews, and the article was devoted primarily to Warnche's performance, with Waßmann, Rethwisch, Lüft, Commentz, Fritze, and Krüger collectively receiving a positive mention. The chorus was also commended for its good work.¹⁵⁰

One of the two works chosen for a benefit performance for Ferdinand Lauterbach on 14 March was Conradi's operetta *Liebchen auf dem Dache*, a work performed many times in the past by German theatre groups and familiar to the German public in New Orleans. Lauterbach and Waßmann both sang well and rendered tasteful performances. The role of Polycarp Schnabelius, played by Carl Fritze, was too high for his voice, although the reviewer applauded his

¹⁴⁸ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 29 April 1871, p. 8, c. 4.

¹⁴⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 2 February 1871, p. 8, c. 6.

¹⁵⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 14 March 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

efforts for his execution of the role. Lauterbach received warm applause and numerous flowers.¹⁵¹

Carl Fritze's benefit on 18 March was a performance of Offenbach's *Blaubart*. The general impression conveyed by the reviewer of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* was that the performance was not particularly good. Many obstacles prevented a successful rendition of the work, according to the account. The reviewer criticized the script for using irony that was not understood by much of the audience. Elaborate scenery and a full chorus which were requirements of the work were not available.

Fritze received recognition for his efforts in the role of Blaubart, but Fritze was vocally inadequate for the the role, which makes great demands of a singer. The challenging role of Boulotte seemed too difficult for Waßmann, who was considered a vaudeville soubrette and whose voice was not especially suitable for the role.¹⁵²

An icy cold rain resulted in a half-empty house for the performance of Donizetti's *Die Regimentstochter* on 28 March, which was a benefit for Betty Hertzberg who had been a cast member in local productions at the National theatre since the initial season of the theatre. In spite of the poor attendance, however, the review reported that the performance was surprisingly good. Waßmann as Marie was in great voice, good in volume and in the use of her voice, and rendered a perfect performance both in her portrayal of the role in an accurate opera buffa style. Outstanding were her first-act duet with Rethwisch (Sulpice), her duet with Lauterbach (Tonio), the intermezzo and her "Heil dir, mein Vaterland."¹⁵³ Rethwisch rendered a good performance, and

¹⁵¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 15 March 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁵² *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 19 March 1871, p. 8, c. 6.

¹⁵³ The article in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* erroneously placed the aria "Heil dir, mein Vaterland" in the third act of the opera. In the original version the opera is in two acts. The convention of the time may have divided it differently than the original division.

Lauterbach was especially good in his first -act aria in the duet with Waßmann previously mentioned. Hertzberg was praised for demonstrating authority in the role of the Marquise, but the poor attendance seemed to rob her of some of her usual good humor. Carl Fritze, normally good in his comic portrayals, seemed a little distracted in his performance as the *Hofmeister*. On a positive note, the chorus received a note of praise for its precision in the introductory chorus.¹⁵⁴

The 28 April performance of Flotow's *Die Wittwe Gräpin* was the last operatic performance of the season. According to an article in the 30 April issue of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* the season was considered a success because of the high quality of performances. And due to the endurance and sacrifice of a number of German citizens, the season was also viewed as financially successful and produced an optimistic future for German theatre in New Orleans, and this optimism overshadowed the disappointments of the lack of local activity in the previous two years. A sizable number of the sale of subscriptions for the next season had already been sold by the end of the 1870-1871 season, and rendered a hopeful prospect of a lasting German stage endeavor in New Orleans.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 29 March 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁵⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 30 April 1871, p. 8, c. 6.

Chapter Eight

1871-1872 Season

The 1871-1872 season was again an active one for the National Theatre, with a record of twenty-seven performances, the most of any season at the National Theatre, and eight productions, second only to the nine in the previous season. The artistic director for the season was again Oskar Guttman. Stage directors were Richard Homann and O. Ruben, and Hermann Starcke served as music director.¹⁵⁶ Highlights of the season included the staging of two full-scale operas, Flotow's *Stradella* and Auber's *Fra diavolo*.

The operetta season opened October 25 with *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer*, a work not performed at the National Theatre since its premiere season. The brief review reported that the comedy in the performance was very well done. The work was repeated 31 October.

Jacques Offenbach's *Die schöne Helena* opened on 22 November 1871. The leading prima donna of the season, Anna Jäger (Helene), a newcomer to the National Theatre stage, sang the title role splendidly and gracefully even though she suffered from a bad cold, and by the reviewer's perception, sang with only half of her voice. She was never the less hailed as a dramatic singer of the first class and her singing reflecting a well-trained voice with a favorable metallic sound. Her middle and higher ranges were not affected by the cold, although her acting in the critic's view was reserved due to her ailment.¹⁵⁷

Carl Beetz, also in his debut season at the National Theatre, earned praise for his portrayal of Paris. The review in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported

¹⁵⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 25 October 1871, p. 5, c. 3.

¹⁵⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 23 November 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

that his voice was soft and tender, but what he lacked in strength was compensated with loveliness of sound. His duet with Jäger in the second act was performed beautifully. Other members of the cast received praise, and included other newcomers Paula Großen (Orestes), Richard Homann (Calchas), J. Koch (Ajax I), as well as singers heard in previous seasons, including Carl Fritze (Menelaus), O. Ruben (Agamemnon), Gustav Commentz (Achilles), and Gustav Frenzel (Ajax II). According to the review, the chorus, which, at this point in the season was better than it had been in the previous season, still had room for improvement, although it was very good at the end of act one. Conductor Hermann Starcke's leadership of the orchestra was masterful and left nothing to be desired. The review commented that the orchestra was excellent and was already one of the main attractions of the theatre in this season. Scenery and costumes were beautiful and tasteful, and both surpassed any other seen previously on any local stage in the city.¹⁵⁸

The second performance of *Die schöne Helena* was scheduled for the evening of 24 November but was canceled due to Jäger's illness which had grown worse since the first performance.¹⁵⁹ The next performance occurred on 28 November, and even though Jäger had not yet fully recovered, the audience enthusiastically applauded her efforts. The reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* commented that Carl Beetz's acting needed improvement, but Homann and Rubens received good reviews, and Fritze's performance was hailed as quite excellent. The interaction between the chorus and the soloists was considerably better than in the first performance, and the overall impression was that the second performance was much improved from the first.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 24 November 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁶⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 29 November 1871, p. 8, c. 6.

The third performance of *Die schöne Helena* was heard the following night, 29 November, and the performance proceeded more smoothly than the first two performances, according to the review. The work was popular with the audience of the theatre, for attendance was quite high for the first three performances.¹⁶¹

The fourth performance of *Die schöne Helena* occurred on 30 November, and was reported to be a colossal success. The enthusiastic mood of the house seemed to spread to the performers, for the cast sang and acted with uncommon fervor. Jäger was in excellent voice and received a repeat curtain call with an abundance of flowers at the end of the performance. Beetz acted with more life than he had previously, and the rest of the cast including the chorus received favorable comments.¹⁶²

Another of Offenbach's operettas, *Blaubart*, opened 6 December to a well-filled house, but with a less than glowing review. The score to *Blaubart* in the reviewer's estimation made greater demands on the singers than *Die schöne Helena*, and the first performance betrayed those difficulties with general vocal weakness in the singers. Also, the complex dialogue was not readily understood by the audience, and the rapid rendering of the dialogue by the actors did not contribute to understandability by the audience. On the other hand, Anna Jäger's Boulotte was praised as one of her best roles, and her singing was fresh and her role acted with fitting humor. Occasionally, however, her delivery of speech in the dialogue was viewed as too rushed and hurried, allowing some minute details of the text to get lost. Carl Beetz as in *Die schöne Helena*, seemed to need more life in his acting. Others, including Paula Große, Johanna Claußen, Richard Homann, Gustav Commentz, Gustav Frenzel, and Carl Fritze, received favorable mentions in the review.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 30 November 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁶² *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 5 December 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁶³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 7 December 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

The second performance of *Blaubart* followed two nights later, on 8 December, and received a more favorable review. Ensemble in both the musical selections and the dialogue was better than in the first performance. Again, Jäger was in excellent voice, and her performance was regarded as a great success, especially in the third act duet with Beetz, who was weak vocally in the first act, but projected better in the second and third acts. Richard Homann's comic portrayal of Bobesche was well received by the audience causing a furor of laughter with each appearance in the work.

Yet another Jacques Offenbach score, *Hanni weint und Hansi lacht*, received its first performance of the season on 15 December. In the double role of Hanni/Hansi, Paula Große was hailed as excellent by the reviewer of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. Carl Beetz (Killian Müllerbursche) was very good vocally and displayed more life in his characterization than in previous works. Occasionally, however, interaction among the various characters was not always smooth. On a positive note, the review hailed the make-up as incomparable to any seen previously on this stage and in other theatres in the city.¹⁶⁴

The first performance of the season of Offenbach's *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* on 12 January was played to a full house, which responded to the comic dialogue with liberal applause. The performance received a characteristically good review, which was attributed to the cooperative work of the complete ensemble. Jäger (Eurydice) was again in excellent voice, and her song to Bacchus was especially good. Koch acted and sang well in the role of Jupiter. Frenzel was good as Orpheus, which the reporter viewed as more of an acting role than a singing role. Johanna Claussen, in her debut season in New Orleans, played the role of Cupid with grace and humor and received the favor of the public through abundant applause. Homann as Styrr

¹⁶⁴ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 16 December 1871, p. 8, c. 5.

acted with his usual comic humor. The tasteful scenery was hailed as fine, especially the cloud scene on Mt. Olympus.¹⁶⁵ The work was repeated on 17 January, and, according to the reviewer's report in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, was better and more rounded than the first performance, particularly in the "Fliegen duet" in the third act.¹⁶⁶

An ambitious undertaking for the local company, Friedrich von Flotow's opera *Stradella*, premiered on 29 January. The performance was a benefit for Carl Beetz and a good audience was in attendance for the occasion. Beetz in the title role was in excellent voice, and the reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* commented that this was one of Beetz's best roles to date and his lyrical voice was sufficient for the role, which required little acting. His second-act aria "*Italia, mein Vaterland*" was well presented and received thunderous applause. The aria "*O Madonna*" from act three was sung expressively with sweetness and appropriate nuance, and was met with wild applause from the packed house. Jäger (Leonora) was in her usual excellent voice, and her lovely vocal quality was effective in the role that the reviewer deemed demanding for the singer. However, in the first-act balcony scene, her voice did not project well. The quartet in the second act which included the chorus began somewhat shakily, but progressed successfully in spite of the unsure start. The chorus was generally strong and precise in spite of a few shaky places, including the quartet just mentioned.¹⁶⁷

The review also reported that Gustav Commentz (Bassi) had a small, pretty voice, but too weak for the larger operatic roles. However, his acting was excellent and left nothing to be desired. Fritze (Malvolio) and Homann (Barbarino), both also cited for vocal shortcomings, made up in their acting for what they lacked vocally. The make-up and costumes were both excellent

¹⁶⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 13 January 1872, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁶⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 18 January 1872, p. 8, c. 6.

¹⁶⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 30 January 1872, p. 8, c. 5.

and the performance was cordially received by the public whose enthusiasm prompted repeated curtain calls.¹⁶⁸

Stradella was repeated on 7 February, and miserable weather was credited for causing a low attendance as well as negatively affecting the singers. Beetz's singing was not as clear as in the first performance, and Jäger's voice also seemed hindered. Even Fritze and Homann as the two bandits were not as effective in their respective roles. The costuming also came under attack, for Italian costumes were substituted with Swabisch costumes for no given reason. However, the orchestra was hailed as superior as always.¹⁶⁹

The fifth Offenbach operetta of the season, *Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein*, opened 21 February to a full house. The reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that the performance was excellent and the best production of the season to date, with soloists and chorus strong and accurate. The highlight of the performance was the first act, especially the duet between Jäger (the *Großherzogin*) and Beetz (Fritz), even though the review reported that Beetz was suffering from laryngitis that evening and only his higher range was somewhat effective. Jäger was reportedly in good voice, and her acting quite sufficient to the requirements of the role. However, Johanna Claussen (Wanda) was not as good as she had been in earlier performances of the season. The trio in the second act between Homann (General Bum), Fritze (Prinz Paul), and Koch (Baron Puck) was quite funny and brought laughter from the audience. Frenzel (Nepomuk) was reviewed as a very funny figure. The reviewer also praised the costumes.¹⁷⁰

Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein was repeated two nights later, 23 February, with fewer in attendance than at the opening performance, due to an orchestra concert at Odd Fellows Hall. Both Beetz and Claussen were in better

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 8 February 1872, p. 8, c. 6.

¹⁷⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 22 February 1872, p. 8, c. 6.

voice than on the opening night of the work, according to the review in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. A third performance was announced for 25 February.¹⁷¹

Goethe's *Egmont* was performed for the first time in New Orleans on 26 February, and was a benefit performance for Kapellmeister Hermann Starcke.¹⁷² According to the announcement of the work on the day of the performance, the entire incidental music by Beethoven was to be given during the performance.¹⁷³

The second full-scale opera presented in the season, Auber's *Fra diavolo*, received a single performance on 18 March and was a benefit performance for Anna Jäger, who played the role of Zerline. The audience, reported to be the best yet of the season, applauded Jäger at her first appearance of the evening. The reviewer said that her performance left nothing to be desired and that her singing was especially lovely in the duet in act one and in the night scene at the end of the second act. Johanna Claussen was good as usual and her lack of strength of voice was compensated by her excellent acting. The men's roles, on the other hand, were less satisfying to the reviewer. Carl Beetz in the title role rendered an inaccurate and incomplete characterization of "Fra diavolo." His acting was stiff and wooden, and his voice reportedly not equal to the role's requirements. Frenzel (Lorenzo) was also viewed as not adequate vocally and unable to get through the part; however, the reviewer interjected that Frenzel deserved recognition for his efforts in performing a role outside of his ability. Commentz (no role specified) was weak vocally as in previous roles, but characteristically made a valiant effort. Homann, on the other hand, was good in his portrayal of the eccentric Englishman Lord Rosbourg. Koch and

¹⁷¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 24 February 1872, p. 8, c. 5. No review or evidence that the performance took place can be found, although it is assumed that it did in fact take place as announced, for in similar instances, cancellation of a performance was generally reported.

¹⁷² *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 24 February 1872, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁷³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 26 February, 1872, p. 8, c. 6.

Fritze played the bandits well. The orchestra, as usual, was hailed as excellent.¹⁷⁴

Fra diavolo marked the last operatic performance of the 1871-1872 season.

¹⁷⁴ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 19 March 1872, p. 8, c. 5.

Chapter Nine

1872-1873 Season and 1877-1878 Season

The number of productions and performances in the 1872-1873 season dropped considerably from the two previous seasons. Apparently a decline of interest in German culture resulted as the German immigrant community began to become assimilated into New Orleans culture and lost its ties to the fatherland.

In announcements for the season, Gustav Commentz, an actor from previous seasons, was listed as artistic director and head stage manager. Carl Fritze, also a cast member from previous seasons, was listed as stage manager of *Posse* and operetta. The conductor, or *Kapellmeister*, was Otto Weber.¹⁷⁵

The operetta season opened on 2 December with Jacques Offenbach's one-act operetta *Fortunio's Lied*, not heard previously at the National Theatre, although it had been presented in earlier seasons in New Orleans prior to the building of the theatre. The review of the performance was brief, and stated that it was well-rehearsed and left nothing to be desired. The orchestra was praised as excellent.¹⁷⁶ *Fortunio's Lied* was repeated 11 December.¹⁷⁷

Another Offenbach operetta, *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne*, not heard at the National Theatre since 1867, was presented on 23 December. According to the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* Carl Fritze (Peter), even though he was not a "true singer," sang well through his limitations, and what he lacked in singing voice was more than compensated by his excellent acting. Lina Waßmann (Catharina), in her debut season at the National Theatre, and Johanna Claussen

¹⁷⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 1 December 1872, p. 5, c. 3.

¹⁷⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 3 December 1872, p. 8, c. 6.

¹⁷⁷ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 11 December 1872, p. 5, c. 2.

(Anna Marie), heard in the previous season, both sang well and their “fighting duet” excellent, as were the “drinking song” and the “Vespers bells quartet.” The performance was well received.¹⁷⁸

Die Verlobung bei der Laterne was again performed 8 January, with the house not full. Carl Fritze, in a role of Peter, which he had sung in previous seasons at the theatre, had a cold but sang reasonably well and with good expression; his acting was again praised. Both Waßmann and Claussen received good reviews for their singing as well as for their appearances, and their “fighting duet” was excellent and generated lively applause as well as a curtain call. The review commented that Frau Helmer in the role of Liese was the favorite of the audience as well as the review, and reminded him of Julie Rühmann’s performance of this role in the 1866-1867 season.¹⁷⁹ Helmer’s voice was somewhat weak but gentle and sympathetic. Also receiving favorable mention were the “drinking song” and the beautiful scene in the garden. The orchestra was hailed as excellent as always.¹⁸⁰

The third Offenbach operetta, *Lieschen und Fritzchen*, was given 21 February. Both Waßmann and Claussen (specific roles not mentioned) were splendid in their respective roles, and Waßmann’s tasteful humor incited the public to strong applause.¹⁸¹

Toward the end of the season, forms of entertainment other than theatrical works, including acrobatic shows, were introduced and the performance of operatic works was curtailed until the 1877-1878 season.

¹⁷⁸ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 24 December 1872, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁷⁹ This statements points up the possibility that the same reviewer had written reviews of performances at the National Theatre for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* since the first season (1866-1867), and that there exists reasonable consistency in the reviewing of performances by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* at the National Theatre at least through the 1872-1873 season, which was the last year of “quality” productions until the 1877-1878 season, which seems to be the last season that operetta or opera was performed at the National Theatre, with only a few isolated exceptions.

¹⁸⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 9 January 1873, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁸¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 22 February 1873, p. 8, c. 6.

1877-1878 Season

There was once again a period of no operatic activity at the National Theatre, lasting from the close of the 1873 season to the opening of the 1877-1878 season. According to an article in the *Daily Picayune* of 2 July 1887, after the 1872-1873 season the theatre was erroneously reported to have been closed *forever* (emphasis added) as a German theatre, after which "the name was changed to the Globe Theater and a variety show given which gradually became more and more free and easy until the reputation of the place as a respectable place of amusement was greatly damaged."¹⁸² However, both the *Daily Picayune* and the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* referred to the theatre as the National Theatre in 1877-1878 season.

Contrary to the statement above from the *Daily Picayune*, however, there was yet another attempt made, this one in 1877, to revive German theatre productions at the National Theatre, and the final season for the theatre as a German entity opened 4 November 1878, with a certain Frau Methua-Scheller as its artistic director, who, with the theatre's supporters, sought to establish another vibrant and stable German theatre company. An article in the 4 November issue of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reported that in the German community sufficient interest existed for a respectable theatrical enterprise if good productions were offered.¹⁸³

A benefit performance for stage director L. Holfelder was held on 13 February¹⁸⁴ with a staging of Franz von Suppe's operetta *Die schöne Galathee*, with the prima donna of the season, Emma Kuster, performing the title role. Kuster's performance was hailed as a complete triumph, and her singing was

¹⁸² *Daily Picayune*, 2 July 1887, p. 2, c. 1-2.

¹⁸³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 4 November 1877, p. 8, c. 2.

¹⁸⁴ *Preciosa*, included in Appendix B, was performed 1 February. (*Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 2 February 1878, p. 8, c. 5.)

reported by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* to be clear as a bell even in her high range. Her acting and appearance were praised as graceful. Performing also in *Die schöne Galathee* were Frau Methua-Scheller, whose Ganymede and was satisfying in both her acting and singing. Paul Hambrock sang the role of Midas, with Herr Heckler performing Pygmalion, who the review reported was good in the role. Carl Beyer, conductor for the season, led the orchestra that the reviewer said was commendable.¹⁸⁵

Die schöne Galathee was repeated 23 February as a matinee with reduced ticket prices. Again Emma Kuster sang the title role. According to the review, matinees had not been hugely successful, but Kuster's name generated a good crowd for the performance and she was greeted her with enthusiastic applause for her performance.¹⁸⁶

Donizetti's *Die Regimentstochter* (also called *Marie, die Tochter des Regiments* in the review) was opened on 20 February with a full house in attendance, and was hailed by both the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* and the *Daily Picayune*¹⁸⁷ as a great success due to the performance of Emma Kuster in the title role. Kuster was in excellent voice and was lovely in appearance. Fräulein Carfano was the Marquise, with Herr Weyand as Tonio, Hambrock as Trouillon and Herr Sachse as Phillippe. The scenery was good and the performance well rehearsed, according to the review, which gave the director praise for having taken great care with the preparation of the production.¹⁸⁸

Die Regimentstochter was repeated two nights later, 22 February. Again the reviewer reported that Emma Kuster was splendid. During the first intermission she also sang "*Wer weiß, ob wir uns wiedersehen*" from *Die*

¹⁸⁵ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 13 February 1878, p. 8, c. 5.

¹⁸⁶ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 23 February 1878, p. 8, c. 4.

¹⁸⁷ *Daily Picayune*, 21 February 1878, p. 1, c. 4. However, the audience was criticized by the reviewer as "not half equal to the merits of the performance."

¹⁸⁸ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 21 February 1878, p. 8, c. 6.

Hugenoten, as well as one of Susanna's arias from *Figaro's* [sic] *Hochzeit*.¹⁸⁹ Other comments regarding *Die Regimentstochter* included praise for Bruno Sachse for his excellent portrayal of the Haushofmeister, and that Hambrock's excellent singing contributed to a very able ensemble. Captain Sambolo's fifth Compagnie of New Orleans Artillery corp furnished troops as supernumeraries that appeared as military members of the cast. An interesting feature of the performance, one that gives insight to performance procedures at the theatre, was a zither solo which was performed by Bernard Bohnert during the second intermission. Bohnert rendered the solo so well that it had to be repeated.¹⁹⁰ The production was repeated on 22 March.¹⁹¹

On 7 March a benefit performance was held for the military regiment that had appeared in the production of *Die Regimentstochter*. The performance, given to a full house, consisted of a variety of events, including solo vocal and instrumental performances, and closed with Offenbach's one-act operetta *Hanni weint und Hansi lacht*. Kuster performed the role of Hännchen Blühweis, and sang other operatic arias in the course of the evening as well.¹⁹²

The last operetta production for the season, and actually for a local company in the National Theatre, was a performance of Suppé's *Flotte Bursche*, which was a benefit for Bruno Sachse, with less than a full house in attendance. Emma Kuster played the double role of Frinke/Lieschen, and her performance was reviewed as excellent and received the praise of a well-earned triumph. Hambrock (Stiefelwichser) sang well and Heckler's performance of Anton was viewed as quite fine. Herr Vermes played the role of Cameel with humor, and Bruno Sachse (Hieronymus Geier) was cordially received and applauded

¹⁸⁹ This is but one of numerous examples of the reviewer for the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* mixing properties of the English language with German.

¹⁹⁰ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 23 February 1878, p. 8, c. 4.

¹⁹¹ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 22 March 1878, p. 5, c. 1.

¹⁹² *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 7 March 1878, p. 8, c. 6.

frequently. The orchestra, which was reinforced for this production, played well and received appropriate applause.¹⁹³

Flotte Bursche marked the end of operetta and opera productions at the National Theatre by a local company. After the theatre was sold to Philip Werlein in 1880 and the name changed to Werlein Hall, it was used for church and school functions generally, and then only occasionally. A performance of *Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein* was performed at Werlein Hall in 1884,¹⁹⁴ which was truly a rare occurrence after 1878. After the theatre was sold, some German theatrical productions were staged at various theatres in the city. However, throughout the later 1870's and the 1880's waning interest in German culture as a separate entity in New Orleans brought an end to German theatre produced by German immigrants or descendent in 1890.

¹⁹³ *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, 28 March 1878, p. 8, c. 3.

¹⁹⁴ Lenis Joseph Richard, Jr. "The Development of Opera in New Orleans from the Civil War to the Burning of the French Opera House in 1919" (Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University 1959), 99.

Chapter Ten

Conclusion

In the National Theatre's relatively short existence as a German theatrical endeavor, there were eight active seasons in which operatic works were performed. For the first two seasons, Fall 1866-Winter 1868, both productions by the local company and those of touring companies were heard at the theatre. The following two seasons, Winter 1868-Winter 1870, only touring companies performed operas. Three seasons of exclusively local activity followed, Fall 1870-Spring 1873. The 1870-1871 and 1871-1872 seasons were the most active in the theatre's history in number of productions and performances. After the close of the 1873 season, a four-year period followed in which no operatic productions were staged at the National Theatre and the theatre did not function as a German enterprise. A revival of German theatre that included operatic productions occurred in the 1877-1878 season, which proved to be the last season German productions were staged at the theatre.

The National Theatre produced an equal number of operas and operettas in German, fifteen of each. A total of forty-seven performances of fifteen operas were performed in the twelve year period, 1866-1878, with about two-thirds of those performances performed by touring companies and the remaining third staged by the various local companies of the theatre. The operas included works by Auber, Beethoven, Boieldieu, Conradi, Donizetti, Flotow (2), Gounod, Halévy, Kreutzner, Lortzing, Mozart (2), Verdi, and Weber.

All of the operettas were performed by the local companies. Of the fifteen operettas produced, nine were Offenbach works, two were works by

von Suppé, two by Conradi, and one each by Flotow and Stiegmann. Two dramas, Goethe's *Egmont* and Wolf's *Preciosa* are included in this monograph because the incidental music to the plays was composed by Beethoven and Weber respectively. monuments of early German romantic opera.

The two sources used primarily for the material for this monograph were reviews found in two New Orleans newspapers, the *Daily Picayune* and the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. The two papers differ somewhat in their respective approaches in reviewing the various performances. The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* reviewed almost every performance at the National Theatre, while the *Daily Picayune* reviewed virtually all of the performances of the various touring companies but reviewed local productions only sporadically. The reviews in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* often rate the quality of performances at the National Theatre as equal or better than those heard at other New Orleans theatres, particularly at the French Opera House. The *Daily Picayune* often refers to the audience of the National Theatre as "our German friends," and often uses the pronoun "they" in reviews, possibly implying that the German community's theatrical activities were outside the mainstream of cultural life in New Orleans.

The reviewer of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* was often a propagandist for the theatre and German culture in New Orleans in particular, generally praising performers and performances and giving negative comments only when blatant problems occurred, such as technical problems that persisted after several performances. Even when a singer was experiencing vocal difficulty, the reviewer generally made a positive remark regarding that singer's acting ability. However, the reviews of the 1867 Italian touring company's performances were generally caustic. It seems that it was easier for the

reviewer to point out that company's deficiencies rather than the various local companies' shortcomings.

The reviews of the *Daily Picayune* are generally short and positive, and most often mention only successful performances of those appearing in leading roles. The reviews are not much more than a report of what work was performed and not always who was performing, and even less often what characters were played by whom. The review of a local performance of *Der Freischütz*, 20 November 1867, mentioned important citizens of New Orleans who were seen at the National Theatre, giving a hint of the social prominence associated with attendance at the theatre.¹⁹⁵

During and after the flourishing of the National Theatre, its presence contributed significantly to the culture of New Orleans particularly (though not exclusively) in the German population of the city. Its influence on the operatic life of nineteenth-century New Orleans can be seen in the introduction of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Kreutzner's *Das Nachtlager in Granada* and several operettas to the New Orleans public. Verdi's *Il Trovatore* was performed in German for the first time in the United States in New Orleans in 1868, and although this may not be regarded as a significant influence on opera in New Orleans, it does hold the distinction of having been the first performance of that Italian opera in German in the United States.

Even though the National Theatre produced operatic works for a mere twelve years, 1866-1878, and only eight seasons in that time span, it deserves inclusion in the operatic history of New Orleans, seeing the performance of a total of thirty works, and by the accounts available, with a reasonable amount of success. The National Theatre, though often overshadowed by the French Opera House, the Academy of Music, the St. Charles Theatre, and the Varieties

¹⁹⁵ *Daily Picayune*, 21 November 1867, p. 8, c. 1, morning edition. Two of the important citizens in attendance were Mayor Heath and Dr. Avery, the "newly appointed sheriff."

Theatre, was normally included in theatrical announcements in the *Daily Picayune*, particularly from its opening in 1866 through the early 1870's, especially performances by the German touring troupes. In order to obtain a complete and accurate account of the cultural life in post-bellum New Orleans, the activities of the National theatre must be included.

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Appendix A

List of Works by Composer Performed at the National Theatre

Dates of Performances Indicated

(All Works Performed in German; all titles of works listed in German except for standard operas known by the title in the language in which they were written)

Auber, Daniel François Esprit (1782-1871) - *Fra diavolo*

1869: 1 January

1872: 18 March

Beethoven, Ludwig van (1770-1827) - *Egmont* (incidental music)

1872: 16 April

Beethoven, Ludwig van - *Fidelio*

1870: 1 February

Boieldieu, François Adrien (1775-1834) - *Die weiße Dame*

1870: 25, 28 January

Conradi, August¹⁹⁶ (1821-1873) - *Beckers Geschichte*

1866: 8, 20 April

Conradi, August - *Liebchen auf dem Dache*

1866: 26, 29 December

1867: 1, 4 January; 12 April

1871: 14 March

Conradi, August - *Rübezahl*

1871: 18, 23 January

Donizetti, Gaetano (1797-1848) - *Die Regimentstochter*

1871: 28 March; 2 April

1878: 20, 22 February; 22 March

Flotow, Friedrich von (1812-1883) - *Martha*

1867: 29 November; 1, 2 December

1868: 5, 16 February; 30 November

1869: 8 January

1870: 26 January

¹⁹⁶ The composer's name is often spelled "Conradin" in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. The *New Grove* and the *Daily Picayune*, however, use the spelling "Conradi" which is also used in this monograph.

Flotow - *Stradella*

1868: 7 February
 1869: 4 January
 1870: 27 January
 1872: 29 January; 7 February

Flotow - *Die Wittwe Grapin*

1871: 1, 17 February; 28 April

Gounod, Charles (1818-1893) - *Faust*

1868: 6, 13, 18 February
 1869: 2, 10 January

Halévy, Jacques Fromental (1799-1862) - *Die Jüdin*

1870: 5 February

Kreutzner, Conradin (1780-1849)- *Das Nachtlager in Granada*

1870: 2 February

Lortzing, Albert (1801-1851) - *Czar und Zimmerman*

1867: 3 November

Mozart, Wolfgang A. (1756-1791)- *Don Giovanni*

1870: 30 January

Mozart, Wolfgang A. - *Die Zauberflöte*

1868: 11, 14 February
 1869: 3, 5 January
 1870: 23 January

Offenbach, Jacques (1819-1880) - *Blaubart*

1871: 21 March; 6, 8, 10, 21 December

Offenbach, Jacques- *Fortunio's Lied*

1872: 2, 11 December

Offenbach, Jacques - *Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein*

1872: 21, 23, 25 February; 13 March

Offenbach, Jacques - *Die Hanni weint und Hansi lacht*

1871: 15 December
 1878: 7 March

Offenbach, Jacques - *Lieschen und Fritzchen*

1871: 31 March; 21 April
 1873: 21 February

Offenbach, Jacques - *Orpheus in der Unterwelt*

1867: 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 14, 17 March
 1872: 12, 17, 21 January; 3 March

Offenbach, Jacques - *Die schöne Helena*

1871: 22, 28, 29, 30 November; 3 December

Offenbach, Jacques - *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne*

1867: 14, 16, 21, 24, 26 January; 7 February; 7, 16 March; 20 April; 21 November;
19 December

1872: 23 December

1873: 8 January

Offenbach, Jacques - *Die Zaubergeige*

1871: 21 February

Stiegmann, E. (dates unknown) - *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer*¹⁹⁷

1866: 18 December

1867: 21, 24, 26 January

1871: 25, 31 October

1873: 18 January

Suppé, Franz von (1819-1895)- *Flotte Bursche*

1878: 27 March

Suppé, Franz von - *Die schöne Galathee*

1870: 18, 21, 30 November

1871: 15 January; 20 December

1878: 13, 23 February

Suppé, Franz von - *Mozarts Leben und Tod*

1870: 2 December

Verdi, Giuseppe (1813-1901) - *Il Trovatore*

1869: 12, 25 January

Weber, Carl Maria von (1786-1826) - *Preciosa* (music for the melodrama)

1867: 5 April

1871: 12 March

1872: 30 March

1877: 1 February

Weber, Carl Maria von - *Der Freischütz*

1867: 15, 17, 20 November

1868: 9, 12 February; 31 December

1869: 9 January

1870: 24 January

¹⁹⁷ *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer* is labeled "Vaudeville" and "Vaudeville Posse" in the 1866-1867 issues of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, but is labeled "operetta" in 1871 editions. Accurate genre identification of this work is difficult due to the lack of availability of a score; however, inconsistencies abound regarding classification of other works as well. One notable multi-labeling of a work, Donizetti's *Die Regimentstochter* (among many titles), labeled operetta an announcement in 1871, is labeled "Vaudeville in 4 Akten" in an announcement of a performance of the work 22 March 1878.

Appendix B

Chronological List of Performances and Performers Performers and Roles listed when available

1866-1867 Season

1866

- December 18 *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer - Stiegmann*¹⁹⁸
- | | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| Doctor Hippe | Julius Ascher |
| Aurora | Caroline Lindemann |
| Amalie | Dora Rolff |
| Fischer | Carl Frücke |
| Amandus | Richard Kaps |
| Guste | Antoinette Fehringer |
| Erster Träger | Ferdinand Göbel |
| Zweiter Träger | Albert Rolff |
- 26 *Liebchen auf dem Dache - Conradi*¹⁹⁹
- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Polycarp Schnabelius | Julius Ascher |
| Serafin | Richard Kaps |
| Frau Ros'l | Caroline Lindemann |
| Martina | Antoinette Fehringer |
| Ein Nachtwächter | Herr Kricki ²⁰⁰ |
| | Carl Kerssen, conductor |
- 29 *Liebchen auf dem Dache-- Conradi*
same cast as 26 December

1867

- January 1 *Liebchen auf dem Dache - Conradi*
same cast as 26 December

Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer is labeled "Vaudeville Posse" in the 1866-1867 issues of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, but is labeled "operetta" in 1871 editions. Accurate genre identification of this work is difficult due to the lack of availability of a score; however, inconsistencies abound regarding classification of works. One notable multi-labeling of a work, Donizetti's *Die Regimentstochter* (one among many titles rendered by the paper), labeled operetta in 1871, is labeled "Vaudeville in 4 Akten" in an announcement of a performance of the work 22 March 1878.

¹⁹⁹ The composer's name is often spelled "Conradin" in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. The *New Grove* and the *Daily Picayune* use the spelling "Conradi" which is the spelling used in this monograph.

²⁰⁰ Full names or a first-name initial are given when available. German titles (Herr, Frau, Fräulein) found in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* are given when only last names are available. Also, only roles are listed when singers are identified with specific roles. Conductors are listed only when mentioned in a review or an announcement.

- 4 *Liebchen auf dem Dache* - Conradi
same cast as 26 December
- 14 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
 Peter Richard Kaps
 Liese Julie Rühmann
 Nachtwächter Ferdinand Göbel
 Anna Marie Antoinette Fehringer
 Catharina Dora Rolff
 Carl Kerksen, conductor
- 16 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
same cast as 14 January
- 21 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
same cast as 14 January
Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer - Stiegmann
same cast as 18 December
- 24 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
same cast as 14 January
Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer - Stiegmann
same cast as 18 December
- 26 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
same cast as 14 January
Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer - Stiegmann
- February 7 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
same cast as 14 January
- March 1 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
 Eurydice Antoinette Fehringer
 Orpheus Richard Kaps
 Die Öffentliche Meinung Julie Rühmann
 Aristäus/Pluto Carl Wedderin
 Jupiter Julius Ascher
 Juno Caroline Lindemann
 Venus Wilhelmine Rhode
 Hebe Minna Ostermann
 Diana Dora Rolff
 Cupido Alma Ascher
 Minerva Betty Hertzberg
 Thalia Julie Gärtner
 Apollo Fritz Hübner
 Mars Carl Koppe
 Merkur Emil Laßwitz
 Plutus Ferdinand Goebel
 Aesculap Albert Rolff
 (continued on next page)

Vulcan	Herr Krist
Morpheus	Herr Racke
Aeolus	Herr Behrens
Neptun	Herr Hauck
Hans Styr	Theodor Frücke
Bachus	Herr Kramer
	Carl Kerssen, conductor

2 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
same cast as 1 March

4 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
same cast as 1 March

7 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
same cast as 1 March

9 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
same cast as 1 March

14 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
same cast as 1 March

16 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
same cast as 14 January

17 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
same cast as 1 March

April

5 <i>Preciosa</i> - Weber ²⁰¹	
Don Francesco de Carcamo	Ferdinand Göbel
Don Alonzo	Carl Koppe
Don Fernando de Azevedo	Emil Laßwitz
Donna Clara	Betty Hertzberg
Don Eugenio	Fritz Hübner
Don Contreras	Theodor Frücke
Donna Petronella	Julie Gärtner
Der Zigeuner-Hauptmann	Carl Wedderin
Viarda	Caroline Lindemann
Preciosa	Minna Ostermann
Lorenz	Albert Rolff
Sebastian	Herr Kricki
Pedro	Julius Ascher
Fabio	Herr Weber
Ambrosio	Richard Kaps

²⁰¹ This work, labeled *Schauspiel* in Jähns, *Car Mario von Weber in seinen Werken*, receives both "*Romantisches Schauspiel mit Gesang*" and "*Melodrama*" labeling by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*, but is included due to the composer of the music von Weber.

- 8 *Beckers Geschichte* - Conradi
 Siegfried Berger Richard Kaps
 Rosalinde Dora Rolff
 Schluber Julius Ascher
- 12 *Liebchen auf dem Dache* - Conradi
 same cast as 26 December
- 20 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
 same cast as 14 January
- Beckers Geschichte* - Conradi
 same cast as 8 April

1867-1868 Season²⁰²

1867

- November 3 *Czar und Zimmerman* - Lortzing
 Sophia Dziuba
 Eliza Gisebele
 Anton Graff
 Conrad Müller
 Herr Hafner
- 15 *Der Freischütz* - von Weber
 Agathe Antoinette Fehringer
 Anne Sophia Dziuba
 Max Conrad Müller
 Caspar Anton Graff
 Hermit Wilhelm Bach
- 17 *Der Freischütz* - von Weber
 Antoinette Fehringer
- 19 *Der Freischütz* - von Weber
 Antoinette Fehringer
 Anton Graff
 Conrad Müller
- 21 *Der Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach

²⁰² Issues of the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* are not available from the fall of 1867 through 31 December 1868. The *Daily Picayune* is the only source, and cast lists are often incomplete or unavailable in the reviews. Advertisements in the classified sections of works to be performed rarely contain cast members or characters lists.

	29	<i>Martha - Flotow</i> Lady Harriet Nancy Lord Tristan Lionel Plunkett	Antoinette Fehringer Sophia Dziuba Wilhelm Bach Conrad Müller Anton Graff
December	1	<i>Martha - Flotow</i>	
	2	<i>Martha - Flotow</i>	
	19	<i>Die Verlobung bei der Laterne - Offenbach</i>	Antoinette Fehringer Sophia Dziuba Elise Gisebele Conrad Müller
<u>1868</u>			
February	5	<i>Martha - Flotow</i> Harriet Nancy Lionel Plunkett Lord Tristan Judge	Clara Lang Marie Friederici Signor Lotti Joseph Weinlich Heinrich Steinecke Anton Graff Groscurt, conductor
	6	<i>Faust - Gounod</i> Faust Marguerite Mephistopheles Valentine	Franz Himmer Marie Friederici Joseph Weinlich Heinrich Steinecke
	7	<i>Stradella - Flotow</i> Leonora Stradella Barbarino Malvolio Signor Bassi	Clara Lang Franz Himmer Anton Graff Heinrich Steinecke Joseph Weinlich
	9	<i>Der Freischütz - von Weber</i> Agathe Max Anne	Marie Friederici Signor Lotti Sophia Dziuba
	11	<i>Der Zauberflöte - Mozart</i> Pamina Tamino Papageno (continued on next page)	Marie Friederici Signor Lotti Anton Graff

Queen of the Night	Clara Lang
Sarastro	Joseph Weinlich
Papagena	Sophia Dziuba
First Priest	Heinrich Steinecke
Second Priest	Herr Sekele

- 12 *Der Freischütz* - von Weber
 Max Franz Himmer
 remainder of cast same as 9 February
- 13 *Faust* - Gounod
 same cast as February 6
- 14 *Die Zauberflöte* - Mozart
 Tamino Franz Himmer
- 16 *Martha* - Flotow
 Lionel Franz Himmer
 remainder of cast same as 5 February

1868-1869 Season

1868

- December 30 *Martha* - Flotow
 Lady Harriet Clara Lang-Ziegler
 Nancy Marie Friederici
 Lionel Franz Himmer
 Joseph Weinlich
 Heinrich Steinecke
 Wilhelm Bach
 Predigam, conductor
- 31 *Der Freischütz* - Weber
 Agathe Marie Friederici
 Anna Clara Lang-Ziegler
 Max Franz Himmer
 Caspar Joseph Weinlich
 Monk Wilhelm Bach
 Ottocar Heinrich Steinecke
 Predigam, conductor

1869

- January 1 *Fra diavolo* - Auber
 Lorenzo Franz Himmer
 Beppo Clara Lang-Ziegler
 Johan Armand
 Heinrich Steinecke
 Wilhelm Bach

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>2 <i>Faust</i> - Gounod
 Gretchen
 Faust
 Mephisto
 Siebel</p> | <p>Marie Friederici
 Franz Himmer
 Joseph Weinlich
 Clara Lang-Ziegler</p> |
| <p>3 <i>Die Zauberflöte</i> - Mozart
 Pamina/Papagena
 Queen of the Night
 Sarastro
 Tamino
 Papageno</p> | <p>Marie Friederici
 Clara Lang-Ziegler
 Joseph Weinlich
 Franz Himmer
 Heinrich Steinecke
 Wilhelm Bach</p> |
| <p>4 <i>Stradella</i> - Flotow
 Stradella</p> | <p>Franz Himmer
 Clara Lang-Ziegler
 Johan Armand
 Heinrich Steinecke</p> |
| <p>5 <i>Die Zauberflöte</i> - Mozart
 same cast as 3 January</p> | |
| <p>6 <i>Fra diavolo</i> - Auber</p> | <p>Marie Friederici
 Clara Lang-Ziegler
 Franz Himmer
 Johan Armand
 Wilhelm Bach
 Heinrich Steinecke
 Joseph Weinlich</p> |
| <p>8 <i>Martha</i> - Flotow
 same cast as 30 December</p> | |
| <p>9 <i>Der Freischütz</i> - Weber
 same cast as 31 December</p> | |
| <p>10 <i>Faust</i> - Gounod
 Siebel
 remainder of cast same as 2 January</p> | <p>Johan Armand</p> |
| <p>12 <i>Il Trovatore</i> - Verdi
 Manrico
 Azucena
 Leonora
 Fernando
 Count de Luna</p> | <p>Franz Himmer
 Marie Friederici
 Clara Lang-Ziegler
 Joseph Weinlich
 Heinrich Steinecke</p> |

- 25 *Il Trovatore*
 Manrico Johan Armand
 remainder of cast same as 12 January

Winter 1870 Season

1870

January

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 23 | <i>Die Zauberflöte - Mozart</i>
Pamina
Queen of the Night
Tamino
Papageno
Papagena
Monostatos ²⁰³
Sarastro | Bertha Johannsen
Amelia Jackson
Theodor Habelmannn
Wilhelm Formes
Sophie Dziuba
Heinrich Steinecke
Joseph Weinlich
C. van Ghel, Conductor |
| 24 | <i>Der Freischütz - Weber</i>
Agathe
Anne
Max
Caspar
Cuno | Bertha Johannsen
Sophia Dziuba
Franz Himmer
Wilhelm Formes
Joseph Weinlich
C. van Ghel, Conductor |
| 25 | <i>Die weiße Dame - Boieldieu</i>
George Brown
Anna
Jenny
Margarethe
Gaveston | Theodor Habelmannn
Bertha Johannsen
Sophia Dziuba
Frau Berger
Joseph Weinlich
Heinrich Steinecke
Herr Reichel
C. van Ghel, Conductor |
| 26 | <i>Martha - Flotow</i>
Henrietta
Nancy
Lionel
Plunkett
Tristan
Richter | Amelia Jackson
Sophia Dziuba
Franz Himmer
Wilhelm Formes
Heinrich Steinecke
Herr Reichel
C. van Ghel, Conductor |

²⁰³ The character Monostatos is labeled "Hierorphan" in the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>27 <i>Stradella</i> - Flotow
 Stradella
 Leonora
 Signor Bass</p> | <p>Franz Himmer
 Bertha Johannsen
 Joseph Weinlich
 Habelmannn
 Wilhelm Formes
 C. van Ghel, Conductor</p> |
| <p>28 <i>Die weiße Dame</i> - Boieldieu
 George Brown
 Lady in White
 Gaveston</p> | <p>Theodor Habelmannn
 Amelia Jackson
 Heinrich Steinecke
 Sophia Dziuba
 Joseph Weinlich
 Herr Reichel
 C. van Ghel, Conductor</p> |
| <p>30 <i>Don Giovanni</i> ²⁰⁴ - Mozart
 Donna Anna
 Donna Elmira
 Zerlina
 Don Ottavio
 Don Giovanni
 Leporello
 Masetto
 Commendatore</p> | <p>Bertha Johannsen
 Amelia Jackson
 Sophia Dziuba
 Theodor Habelmannn
 Wilhelm Formes
 Joseph Weinlich
 Herr Wiegand
 Herr Reichel
 C. van Ghel, Conductor</p> |
-
- | | | |
|----------|--|---|
| February | <p>1 <i>Fidelio</i> - Beethoven
 Leonora
 Marcelline
 Florestan
 Jaquino
 Pizarro
 Minister
 Rocco</p> | <p>Bertha Johannsen
 Sophia Dziuba
 Franz Himmer
 Herr Wiegand
 Wilhelm Formes
 Heinrich Steinecke
 Joseph Weinlich
 C. van Ghel, Conductor</p> |
| | <p>2 <i>Das Nachtlager in Granada</i> - Kreutzner
 Gabriele
 Gomez
 Prinz Regent
 Shepherds</p> | <p>Bertha Johannsen
 Theodor Habelmannn
 Wilhelm Formes
 Heinrich Steinecke
 Joseph Weinlich
 Herr Reichel
 C. van Ghel, conductor</p> |

²⁰⁴ The *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung* consistently refers to this opera as *Don Juan*.

4 *Die Jüdin* - Halévy

Eleazar
 Rachel
 Eudoria
 Leopold
 Cardinal Brogni
 Rüdiger

Franz Himmer
 Bertha Johannsen
 Amelia Jackson
 Theodor Habelmann
 Joseph Weinlich
 Heinrich Steinecke
 C. van Ghel, conductor

1870-1871 SeasonNovember 18 *Die schöne Galathee* - Suppé

Galathee
 Ganymed
 Pygmalion
 Midas

Fräulein Maché
 Lina Waßmann
 Ferdinand Lauterbach
 Ernst Rethwisch
 Bh. Greuling, conductor

21 *Die schöne Galathee* - Suppé30 *Die schöne Galathee* - Suppé
 same cast as 18 NovemberDecember 2 *Mozarts Leben und Tod* - Suppé²⁰⁵

Mozart
 Constanze
 Schickaneder
 Joseph Haydn
 Aloise Weber
 Leopold Mozart

Gustav Commentz
 Louise Ungar
 Ernst Rethwisch
 Herr Lühr
 Minna Warnche
 Ernst Rethwisch
 Bh. Greuling, conductor

5 *Mozarts Leben und Tod* - Suppé1871January 15 *Die schöne Galathee* - Suppé18 *Rübezahl* - Conradi

Ferdinand Lauterbach
 Lina Waßmann
 Ernst Rethwisch
 Gustav Frenzel
 Carl Fritze
 Gustav Commentz

(continued on next page)

²⁰⁵ This work is labeled "*Grosses melodramatisches Tonwerk*" by the *Tägliche deutsche Zeitung*. Even though not specifically labeled an opera or operetta, it is included in this monograph due to the composer and the title of the work.

			Dorfwirth Ancht Bh. Greuling, conductor
	23	<i>Rübezahl - Conradi</i>	
February	1	<i>Die Wittwe Grapin - Flotow</i>	Lina Waßmann Ferdinand Lauterbach Ernst Rethwisch
	2	<i>Die Zaubergeige - Offenbach</i>	Ernst Rethwisch Lina Waßmann Ferdinand Lauterbach
	17	<i>Die Wittwe Grapin - Flotow</i> same cast as 1 February	
March	12	<i>Preciosa - Weber</i> Preciosa Don Alonzo Pedro Zigeuner-Hauptmann Don Francesco Azevedo Biarda Don Contreras Eugenio Donna Clara Donna Petronella	Minna Warnche Herr Lühr Ernst Rethwisch Gustav Commentz Carl Fritze Herr Krüger Lina Waßmann Gustav Frenzel Herr Wahlstab Betty Hertzberg Frau Plümer
	14	<i>Liebchen auf dem Dache - Conradi</i> Serafin Marina Polycarp Schnabelius Rose	Ferdinand Lauterbach Lina Waßmann Carl Fritze Betty Hertzberg
	21	<i>Blaubart - Offenbach</i> Blaubart Boulotte Bobèche Popolani Graf Oskar Königin Clementine Prinzessen Hermia Prinz Saphir	Carl Fritze Lina Waßmann Ernst Rethwisch Gustav Commentz Gustav Frenzel Lina Waßmann Mathilde Rethwisch Ferdinand Lauterbach

- | | | | |
|-------|---|--|--|
| 28 | <i>Die Regimentstochter - Donizetti</i> | | |
| | Marie | Lina Waßmann | |
| | Tonio | Ferdinand Lauterbach | |
| | Sulpice | Ernst Rethwisch | |
| | Marquise | Betty Hertzberg | |
| | Hofmeister | Carl Fritze | |
| 31 | <i>Lieschen und Fritzchen - Offenbach</i> | | |
| | Fritzchen | Lina Waßmann | |
| | Lieschen | Mathilde Rethwisch | |
| April | 2 | <i>Die Regimentstochter - Donizetti</i>
same cast as 28 March | |
| | 7 | <i>Die Wittwe Grapin - Flotow</i>
same cast as 1 February | |
| | 21 | <i>Lieschen und Fritzchen - Offenbach</i> | |
| | 28 | <i>Die Wittwe Grapin - Flotow</i>
same cast as 1 February | |

1871-1872 Season

- | | | | |
|----------|----|---|--------------------|
| October | 25 | <i>Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer - Stiegmann</i> | |
| | | Doctor Hippe | Richard Homann |
| | | Aurora | Johanna Claussen |
| | | Clara | Fräulein A. Bender |
| | | Fischer | Herr Koch |
| | | Guste | Paula Grosse |
| | | Amandus | Herr A. Bender |
| | | Erster Träger | G. Heinemann |
| | | Zweiter Träger | Herr Woditzka |
| | 31 | <i>Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer - Stiegmann</i> | |
| | | same cast as 25 October | |
| November | 22 | <i>Die schöne Helena - Offenbach</i> | |
| | | Paris | Carl Beetz |
| | | Menelaus | Carl Fritze |
| | | Helene | Anna Jäger |
| | | Agamemnon | O. Ruben |
| | | Orestes | Paula Grosse |
| | | Pylades | Margarethe Kubisch |
| | | Calchas | Richard Homann |
| | | Achilles | Gustav Commentz |
| | | (continued on next page) | |

Ajax I	Herr J. Koch
Ajax II	Gustav Frenzel
Phaocomus	Herr Weiß
Euthocles	G. Krüger
Bachus	Betty Hertzberg
Leaena	Fräulein Brechting
Parthenis	Fräulein Rosa
	Herrmann Starcke, conductor

28 *Die schöne Helena* - Offenbach
same cast as 22 November

29 *Die schöne Helena* - Offenbach
same cast as 22 November

30 *Die schöne Helena* - Offenbach
same cast as 22 November

December 3 *Die schöne Helena* - Offenbach
same cast as 22 November

6 <i>Blaubart</i> - Offenbach	
Bobèche	Richard Homann
Königin Clementine	Johanna Claussen
Princess Hermia	Paula Grosse
Prinz Saphir	Carl Fritze
Graf Oskar	Gustav Frenzel
Alvarez	Herr Starcke
Ritter Blaubart	Carl Beetz
Heloise	Margarethe Schwartz
Elenore	Louise Ungar
Isaura	Margarethe Kubisch
Rosalinde	Fräulein Rosa
Blanche	Fräulein Bender
Popolant	Gustav Commentz
Boulotte	Anna Jäger
Dorothee	Betty Hertzberg
Marguerite	Fräulein Brechting
Ein Kanzellist	G. Krüger
Ein kleiner Knabe	Kleine Emrich

8 *Blaubart* - Offenbach
same cast as 6 December

10 *Blaubart* - Offenbach
same cast as 6 December

14 *Die schöne Helena* - Offenbach
same cast as 22 November

- 15 *Die Hanni weint und Hansi lacht* - Offenbach
 Hänchen Blühweis Paula Grosse
 Killian Müllerbursche Carl Beetz
 Sebastian Mosthuber Gustav Frenzel
 Niklas Carl Fritze
- 20 *Die schöne Galathee* - Suppé
 Pygmalion Carl Beetz
 Ganymed Paula Grosse
 Midas Richard Homann
 Galathee Anna Jäger
- 21 *Blaubart* - Offenbach
 same cast as 6 December

1872

January

- 12 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
 Orpheus Gustav Frenzel
 Eurydice Anna Jäger
 Aristeus/Pluto Carl Fritze
 Jupiter J. Koch
 Juno Betty Hertzberg
 Venus Margarethe Schwarz
 Cupido Johanna Claussen
 Minerva Margarethe Kubisch
 Diana Fräulein Rosa
 Mars Fritz Hübner
 Merkur Gustav Commentz
 Neptun G. Krüger
 Vulcan J. Stein
 Hymen Herr Wahle
 Apollo Herr Buhlert
 Bacchus Herr Merkel
 Morpheus Geza Berger
 Janus Herr Woditzka
 Hercules Herr Glagau
 Zephyros Herr Weiß
 Castor Herr Dittmar
 Pollux Herr Wiedemann
 Themis Fräulein Brechting
 Ceres Fräulein Touché
 Hebe Frau Plümer
 Vesta Fräulein Dittmar
 Die Öffentliche Meinung Louise Ungar
 Hans Styr Richard Homann
 Charon Herr Wagner
- 17 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
 same cast as 12 January

21 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach

same cast as 12 January

29 *Stradella* - Flotow

Alessandro Stradella	Carl Beetz
Leonore	Anna Jäger
Bassi	Gustav Commentz
Malvolio	Carl Fritze
Barbarino	Richard Homann
Lorenzo	G. Heinemann
Antonio	Herr Buhlert
Carlo	Geza Berger
Juan	J. Stein
Fernando	Herr Woditzka
Guillelmo	Herr Alexander
Maria	Fräulein Rosa
Theresa	Fräulein Brechting
Rosine	Frau Plümer

February 7 *Stradella* - Flotow
same cast as 29 January

21 *Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein* - Offenbach

Die Großherzogin	Anna Jäger
Baron Puck	J. Koch
Ida	Fräulein Brechting
Charlotte	Fräulein Rosa
Olga	Frau Plümer
Amalie	Fräulein Dittmar
Baron Dick	Herr Ernst
Baron Flick	J. Stein
Graf Bump	Herr Buhlert
Marquis Plaid	G. Heinemann
General Bum	Richard Homann
Prinz Paul	Carl Fritze
Baron Haidchnucke	Gustav Commentz
Nepumuk	Gustav Frenzel
Fritz	Carl Beetz
Wanda	Johanna Claussen

23 *Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein* - Offenbach

same cast as 21 February

25 *Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein* - Offenbach

same cast as 21 February

26 *Egmont* - music by Beethoven

Graf Egmont	Herr Starcke
Wilhelm von Oranien	G. Krüger
(continued on next page)	

Herzog von Alba	Gustav Commentz
Ferdinand	Herr Wable
Richard	Geza Berger
Silva	Gustav Frenzel
Gomer	Herr Buhlert
Klärchen, Egmont's Geliebte	Margarethe Schwartz
Klärchens Mutter	Betty Hertzberg
Brackenburg	Fritz Hübner
Soest	Herr Heinemann
Jiter	Richard Homann
Zimmermeister	Carl Fritze
Seifensieder	Herr Woditzka
Buyk	Herr Stein
Ruisum	Herr Meister
Vansen	J. Koch
1ster Bürger von Brüssel	Herr Ernst
2ter Bürger von Brüssel	Herr Weiß
3ter Bürger von Brüssel	Herr Wiedemann

- March 3 *Orpheus in der Unterwelt* - Offenbach
 same cast as 12 January
- 13 *Die Großherzogin von Gerolstein* - Offenbach
 same cast as 21 February
- 18 *Fra diavolo* - Auber
- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Fra diavolo | Carl Beetz |
| Zerline | Anna Jäger |
| Lady Pamala | Johanna Claussen |
| Lord Rosbrough | Richard Homann |
| Bandits | J. Koch and Carl Fritze |
| Lorenzo | Gustav Frenzel |
| Gustav Commentz | |
- 30 *Preciosa* - Weber

1872-1873 Season

- December 2 *Fortunio's Lied* - Offenbach
- 11 *Fortunio's Lied* - Offenbach
- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| Fortunio | J. Koch |
| Paul Friquet | Carl Fritze |
| Marie | Johanna Claussen |
| Valentine | Lina Waßmann |
| Babette | Fräulein Riedel |

- 23 *Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
 Catharina Lina Waßmann
 Anne Marie Johanna Claussen
 Liese Frau Helmer
 Peter Carl Fritze
 Otto Weber, conductor

1873

January

- Die Verlobung bei der Laterne* - Offenbach
 Catharina Lina Waßmann
 Anna Marie Johanna Claussen
 Liese Frau Helmer
 Peter Carl Fritze

- 18 *Guten Morgen, Herr Fischer* - Stiegmann

- February 21 *Lieschen und Fritzchen* - Offenbach
 Lina Waßmann
 Johanna Claussen

- March 17 *Lieschen und Fritzchen* - Offenbach

1877-78 Season1878

February

- 1 *Preciosa* - Weber
 Preciosa Minna Warnche
 Don Alonzo Fräulein Carfano
 Pedro Paul Hambrock
 Zigeuner-Hauptmann Herr Holfelder
 Frau Riedel
 Herr Baden
 Herr Sachse
 Herr Heckler
 Herr Hirschburg
 Herr Bermes
 Fräulein Klein
- 13 *Die schöne Galathee* - Suppé
 Galathee Emma Kuster
 Ganymede Frau Methua-Scheller
 Midas Paul Hambrock
 Pygmalion Herr Heckler
 Carl Beyer, conductor

- | | | | |
|-------|----|---|----------------------|
| | 20 | <i>Die Regimentstochter - Donizetti</i> | |
| | | Marie | Emma Kuster |
| | | Marquise | Fräulein Carfano |
| | | Tonio | Herr Weyand |
| | | Phillippe | Bruno Sachse |
| | | Troullion | Paul Hambrock |
| | 22 | <i>Die Regimentstochter - Donizetti</i>
same cast as 20 February | |
| | 23 | <i>Die schöne Galathee - Suppé</i> | |
| | | Galathee | Emma Kuster |
| March | 7 | <i>Hanni weint und Hansi lacht - Offenbach</i> | |
| | | Hännchen Blühweis | Emma Kuster |
| | 22 | <i>Die Regimentstochter - Donizetti</i> | |
| | | Marie | Emma Kuster |
| | 27 | <i>Flotte Bursche - Suppé</i> | |
| | | Frinke/Lieschen | Emma Kuster |
| | | Hieronymus Geier | Bruno Sachse |
| | | Brand | Frau Methua-Scheller |
| | | Stiefelwichser | Paul Hambrock |
| | | Anton | Herr Heckler |
| | | Cameel | Herr Vermes |

Vita

H. Edward Dacus, Jr. was born 16 January 1954 in Jackson, Mississippi. He grew up in Canton, Mississippi, where he graduated from high school at Canton Academy. Upon graduation from high school he entered the University of Southern Mississippi, where he completed a Bachelor of Music in piano performance in 1977 under Roger Hill. He taught private piano in Greenwood, Mississippi for seven years. He earned a Master of Music in piano performance from the University of Mississippi in 1986 under Natalia da Roza. He continued his studies at Louisiana State University, where he completed a Master of Music in Vocal Performance in 1993 under Robert Grayson. He anticipates graduating from Louisiana State University in December of 1999 with a Doctor of Musical Arts, also under Robert Grayson.

Dacus served on the music faculty of Oklahoma State University from August 1993-May 1999, and is currently a member of the voice faculty at Mississippi College. He is also active as a performer and has sung with several regional opera companies in numerous character tenor roles.

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: H. Edward Dacus, Jr.

Major Field: Music

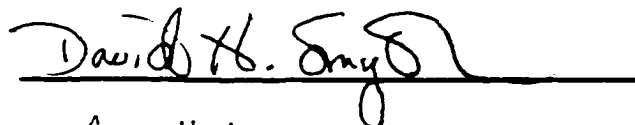
Title of Dissertation: German Opera and Operetta
at the New Orleans National Theatre,
1866-1878

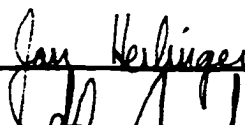
Approved:

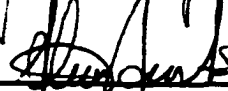

Major Professor and Chairman

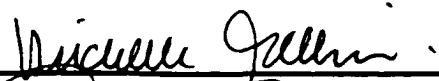

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:











Date of Examination:

November 1, 1999